



# ANIMAL MOTIFS IN ASIAN ART

An Illustrated Guide to  
Their Meanings and Aesthetics

KATHERINE M. BALL



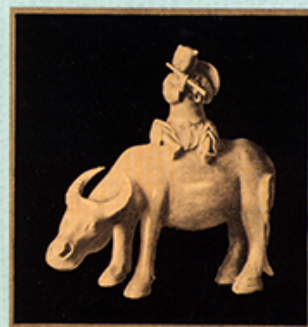




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TO  
THE MEMBERS OF SAKURA KWAI  
WHO  
FOR FIFTEEN YEARS  
HAVE SYMPATHETICALLY JOINED ME  
IN THE PURSUIT OF AN UNDERSTANDING OF ORIENTAL  
PHILOSOPHY, FOLKLORE  
AND ART



## PREFACE

THIS volume is intended to meet a need greatly felt for an interpretation of the motives that so delightfully enrich the artistry of the Orient.

The wide distribution, over the Occident, of these wares, particularly those of China and Japan, has not only led to an appreciation of their great beauty, but has stimulated a desire to know the special meaning of the patterns which decorate them. For interest deepens with the realization that every convention or device thus used—whether derived from the human, animal, plant, or mineral kingdom, and even from the realm of geometry—has significance. And while this may be manifestly obvious or perceptibly equivocal, sometimes poetic or humorous, or again profound and pedantic, involving a religious and mystic import, it ever becomes a source of absorbing interest. The figures of deities and heroes in combination with beasts, birds, fishes, reptiles, and even insects; or any of these in combination with trees, plants, flowers, rocks, water, clouds, or the manifestation of wind, point to alluring legends, while interesting abstractions, forms of pure invention, suggest recondite allusions. Thus the treasured possessions of cultured homes as well as those of museum collections become doubly valued.

In the Orient, art has always been regarded as an important means to an end rather than an end itself. It was used as a medium through which were taught essential lessons of the philosophies of life, in which function it became the auxiliary of ethics and religion.

A noted example of this reciprocal service by which moral instruction has been for centuries most subtly imparted, is given in the subject of “The Carp Leaping the Waterfall.” For, wherever it is represented, whether modelled, carved, painted, printed, embroidered, or woven, it tells the story of the fish attaining the coveted state of dragonhood through its courage, patience, and perseverance in performing the extraordinary feat of surmounting this formidable obstruction. Hence, indirectly but most effectively, this design never fails to instil the idea that he who would make a success of life must emulate the qualities of this creature.

The decorative motives that so constantly confront the student of oriental art seem countless. Yet notwithstanding their number, he soon learns, even from meagre experience, that every one has a special meaning. To ascertain this, however, is a most difficult and laborious task, on account of there being so few books that present this subject in a comprehensive manner. Among those which have proven helpful are *The Descriptive and Historical Catalogue of the Collection of Japanese and Chinese Paintings in the British Museum*, by William Anderson; *Murray's Handbook for Travellers in Japan*, by Basil Hall Chamberlain and William B. Mason; *Legends in Japanese Art*, by Henri L. Joly; *Japanese Art Motives*, by Maud Rex Allen; *The Gods of India*, by E. Osborne Martin; and *The Gods of Northern Buddhism*, by Alice Getty. Other museum and travel guides, as well as Sotheby's sales catalogues and many publications pertaining to the arts and religions of Asia, and books on archæology and ethnology offer desirable information. This is apt, however, to be fragmentary and scattered, so that there still may be found in the graphic arts many motives which, remaining unexplained by writers, call for independent research.

Therefore, while the text of the following includes gleanings from many authors, it also contains much matter that—as far as is known—never before has been published. This has been derived from books, paintings, and the inscriptions on coloured prints of both China and Japan, translated and interpreted by erudite members of our local oriental colony. So interested in this quest were these friends that they always related much more than was written, contributing the traditions of mythology, folk-lore, and history which had been taught them in childhood by their elders.

The contents of this book consist of a revised reprint of a series of articles that appeared in *Japan*, a magazine published in San Francisco by the Toyo Kisen Kaisha Steamship Co.

The original idea was to narrate, mainly, legends, and interpret symbols pertaining to the particular culture that sprang from China and spread through adjacent countries and thence through Korea and



Japan. However, the tracing of the origin of many motives led to the investigation of the art, not only of the Hindus, Persians, Egyptians, and Grecians, but of the ancient Americans—the Incas, Mayas, Toltecs, and the Aztecs—causing the inclusion of both matter and illustration pertaining to these peoples; but at no time has there been any thought of treating this part of the subject, in any sense, exhaustively.

It was also intended to make these articles appear in as beautiful a form as the arts of design and typography could devise. Hence, the opposite pages of the magazine were composed to form a single organism in which the illustrations were inserted into the text so that those in corresponding places would balance each other in size, proportion, and values, as well as express the same ideas of content—a setting which, in the revision, has been retained.

While the labour entailed, in collecting the material herein submitted, and bringing it to its present consummation, has, for a number of years, taken every spare minute of a scant leisure, it has been interesting and pleasurable. From the very beginning the most helpful assistance has been received from many sources. The San Francisco Public Library extended special privileges. Dr. John Fryer and Prof. S. C. Kiang of the Oriental Department of the University of California most kindly supplied excerpts from the Chinese Encyclopædia. Two well-known Japanese artists, Chiura and Kakunen, and the noted Mexican designer, Mr. Francisco Cornejo, not only contributed illustrations but legends and symbols as well. Mr. Will H. Edmunds, the eminent London authority, not only proffered needed corrections of the original text, as well as of the copy before going to press, but most generously made the index.

I was likewise fortunate in having for a secretary, Miss Ruth Wetmore, whose interest in things oriental impelled her to bring an exceptional devotion to the work.

To all these people, as well as to Mr. James King Steele—to whom I am indebted for having given me the opportunity of doing this engrossing piece of work—and to the many others whose sympathetic interest in the undertaking led them to aid me, I am most sincerely grateful. I wish also to acknowledge my obligation to the authors and publishers who graciously not only allowed me to quote from their books, but to freely reproduce their illustrations, and I trust that *Decorative Motives of Oriental Art* may prove to be so beneficial educationally that each and all will feel a just pride in having participated in its production.

KATHERINE M. BALL.

*San Francisco, July, 1926.*

# CONTENTS

## CHAP.

- I. THE DRAGON
- II. THE DRAGON (*continued*)
- III. THE TIGER
- IV. THE PHENIX
- V. THE UNICORN
- VI. THE TORTOISE
- VII. THE TORTOISE (*continued*)
- VIII. THE LION
- IX. THE LION (*continued*)
- X. THE ELEPHANT
- XI. THE ELEPHANT (*continued*)
- XII. THE BULL
- XIII. THE BULL (*continued*)
- XIV. THE HORSE
- XV. THE DEER AND THE GOAT
- XVI. THE MONKEY
- XVII. THE BOAR
- XVIII. THE FOX
- XIX. THE BADGER AND THE BEAR
- XX. THE CAT AND THE DOG
- XXI. THE HARE, THE SQUIRREL AND THE RAT
- XXII. THE SERPENT
- XXIII. THE SERPENT (*continued*), THE TOAD AND THE FROG
- XXIV. SEA-FLOOR LIFE
- XXV. THE FISH
- XXVI. THE FISH (*continued*)
- XXVII. THE CRANE



- XXVIII. THE FALCON
- XXIX. THE PEACOCK
- XXX. THE COCK
- XXXI. WATER-FOWL
- XXXII. THE CROW AND THE SNOWY HERON
- XXXIII. THE CUCKOO AND OTHER BIRDS
- XXXIV. THE BAT AND THE BUTTERFLY
- XXXV. THE DRAGON-FLY AND OTHER INSECTS

# ILLUSTRATIONS

## CHAPTER I

### THE DRAGON

From a painting by Kakunen  
*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut. Astrological Figures Representing the Four Quadrants of the Chinese Uranoscope  
*Author's Collection.*

From an ink-rubbing of a bas-relief of the Han dynasty. Fu Hsi and His Consort Nü Kua, with Attendants  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese tapestry. The Walking Dragon  
*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a drawing by Chiura. The Dragon Horse of the River Lo  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese enamel. The Birth of the Dragon  
*Mrs. W. S. Wood's Collection, San Francisco.*

From a Chinese tapestry. The Sitting Dragon  
*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a painting by Naonobu. The Descending Dragon  
*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Ascending Dragon  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese stencil. The Dragon and Cloud  
*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut. The Whirling, the Flying, and the Fish Dragon  
*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Naonobu. The Ascending Dragon  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese brocade. The Dragon and Cloud  
*The Daibutsu, San Francisco.*

From a woodcut by Tange. Mugé, Bringing the Jewel to Kamatari  
*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. Mugé Pursued by the Dragon Hordes  
*Author's Collection.*

The *Chu* of the Chinese  
*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Morikuni. Taishin-ō Charming the Dragon  
*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. Susano-o Killing the Eight-headed Serpent  
*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Shigemasa. Take-nouchi no Sukune Receiving the Tide Jewels  
*Author's Collection.*

The *Hōju no Tama* of the Japanese



*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Morikuni. The Great Wu Tao-Tsu Painting the Dragon  
*Permission of "Japanese Art," Laurence Binyon.*

## CHAPTER II

### THE DRAGON (*continued*)

From a painting by Kakunen  
*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut of the SHAN-KAI CHING. The Emperor Ch'i  
*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Ch'ên So Wêng.  
*Permission of "Pictorial Arts of Japan," William Anderson.*

From a painting by Ch'ên Yung-chi  
*Permission of "Kokka."*

From woodcuts of the T'U SHU CHI CH'ÊNG  
*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut of the SHAN-KAI CHING. P'ing I, a River God  
*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Mu Ch'i  
*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a screen-painting by Ōkyo. The Tumult of the Dragon Combat  
*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a Buddhist scripture case. The Dragon Sword of Fudō  
*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a woodcut by Sensai  
*Author's Collection.*

From a screen-painting by Ōkyo. The Tumult of the Dragon Combat  
*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Yoshitsuye  
*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. The Dragon Breathing Clouds  
*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Keisai Masayoshi  
*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kunisada. The Dragon King Carrying Shaka and Two Attendants Through a Storm  
*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Keisai Masayoshi  
*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Chao-yüan. A Ride to the Kw'en Lun Mountains  
*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Bunsen. The Dragon of the Waters Struggling to Regain His Pearl of Omnipotence  
*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER III

### THE TIGER

From a painting by Kakunen

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Ōkyo

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From screen-paintings by Tohaku. The Tiger Glares at the Sky, Where the Dragon is Partly Seen Amid Dark Clouds

*Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Tiger and the Waterfall

*Author's Collection.*

From screen-paintings by Tanyū. The Tiger Roars and the Winds Rage; the Dragon Breathes into the Gale and the Clouds Whirl

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a painting by Ōkyo

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Tiger and the Wind

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Shuzan

*Author's Collection.*

From a screen-painting attributed to Tanyū

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Shuzan

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Sadatoshi

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Koryūsai. The Wise Mother

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. Bushō Slaying the Tiger

*Author's Collection.*

From the LI SHUI TS'UAN CHÜAN. Shu Yü and His Tigers

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Morikuni. The Tiger and the Storm

*Author's Collection,*

From a coloured woodcut by Oshū. Defying the Dragon

*Author's Collection.*

From the LI SHUI TS'UAN CHÜAN. WU Ts'ai Lan and Wên Hsiao

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Morikuni. The Tiger and the Waterfall

*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PHENIX

From a painting by Kakunen

*Author's Collection.*



From a coloured woodcut by Hokusai

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Utamaro. Utamaro Painting the *Hō-ō*

*Author's Collection.*

From an embroidery for an Imperial wedding

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Celestial Musician

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Tanshin

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Wu Wei. The Two Queens

*British Museum, London.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kunitsuna. The *Hō-ō* and *Kiri-Branch*

*Author's Collection.*

The Crest of Hideyoshi

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Yeishō. Three Beauties of the *Chōji Ya*

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Harunobu. A *Geisha* Impersonating a Celestial Musician

*Author's Collection.*

The Imperial Crest

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Koryūsai. The Golden Pheasant

*Author's Collection.*

The *Quetzal* of the Aztecs

*Permission of "The Phoenix of the Aztecs," Rudolph Cronan.*

From the LI SHUI TS'UAN CHÜAN. Têng Yu and the *Feng-huang*

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese embroidery for an Imperial wedding

*British Museum, London.*

From a painting by Fang Hêng

*Permission of "Mythical Monsters," Charles Gould.*

From a Japanese porcelain plaque

*G. T. Marsh & Co., San Francisco,*

From the LI SHUI TS'UAN CHÜAN. Hsiao Chili charming the Divine Birds

*Author's Collection.*

A Crest of Mediæval Japan

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Ch'ên Nan-p'in

*Permission of "Kokka."*

## CHAPTER V

### THE UNICORN

From a painting by Kakunen

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Eitaku. The *Kaiba*  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese embroidery  
*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a painting by Tsunenobu  
*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese embroidery  
*The Daibutsu, San Francisco.*

From a woodcut by Eitaku. The *Kirin*  
*Author's Collection.*

From a porcelain tile in a Chinese screen  
*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. The *Hō-ō*  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese porcelain plate. The *Fêng-huang* and *Ch'i-lin*  
*Nathan Bentz & Co., San Francisco.*

From a wooden screen-panel decorated with carved hard-stone ornaments  
*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a Chinese embroidery  
*The Daibutsu, San Francisco.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. The *Kirin*  
*Author's Collection.*

From a wooden screen-panel decorated with carved hard-stone ornaments  
*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a woodcut in the LI SHUI TS'UAN CHÜAN. The *Rishi Chi Shang Yüan*  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese embroidery  
*The Daibutsu, San Francisco.*

From a woodcut in the LI SHUI TS'UAN CHÜAN. The *Rishi Mei Fu*  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese embroidery  
*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a woodcut by Kokushosai. The Visitation of a *Ch'i-lin*  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese embroidery  
*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

## CHAPTER VI

### THE TORTOISE

From a painting by Chiura  
*Author's Collection.*

From an ancient Hindu drawing  
*Author's Collection.*

From an ancient Chinese clay tile  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Korean temple fresco

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a Chinese ink-rubbing. Fu-yen Yeng-fu, God of the North

*Author's Collection.*

From an old Chinese book. The Flag of the Dark Warrior

*Author's Collection.*

From an ancient Chinese mirror-back

*T. Z. Shiota, San Francisco.*

From an old Chinese book. The Flag of the Northern Constellation

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese shrine image. Myōken *Bosatsu*, the Spirit of Polaris

*T. Z. Shiota, San Francisco.*

From a drawing of an ancient Maya monument

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese bronze candlestick

*T. Z. Shiota, San Francisco.*

From a Chinese bronze. Commemorating a Buddhist Sage

*The Daibutsu, San Francisco.*

From a Japanese bronze candlestick

*T. Z. Shiota, San Francisco.*

From a drawing of an ancient Korean monument

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese bronze. Commemorating a Buddhist Sage

*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

## CHAPTER VII

### THE TORTOISE (*continued*)

From a painting by Chiura

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kōrin

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Ōkyo. In the Flow of the Tide

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a drawing by Hokusai. Writing the Character *Fuku*

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kyōsai

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a drawing by Hokusai. Creating the Mystic *Tama*

*Author's Collection.*

From a *surimono* by Shinsai. The Musing *Mino-game*

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Utamaro. Benten's Wedding

*Author's Collection.*



From a coloured woodcut by Yeisen. The Seven Gods of Happiness

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Kansia. *Tsuru to Kame*

*Author's Collection.*

From a *surimono* by Toyohiro. Urashima Tarō

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. *San Gyoku no Kame*

*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE LION

From a painting by Kakunen

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese stencil. Lion Manes and Peonies

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese embroidery in gold thread. Mythical Lions with their Attributes

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese porcelain figure

*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a Chinese embroidery

*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a Japanese stencil. Lion Manes and Peonies

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese porcelain figure

*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige. *Kara-shishi* over the Precipice

*Author's Collection.*

From a screen-painting attributed to Kitao Shigemasa. The Lion Dance

*T. Z. Shiota, San Francisco.*

From a painting by Hokusai. *A Caricature of Ashimai*

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a woodcut by Morikuni

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Tanyū. Monju Bosatsu shown as a Young Prince

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a woodcut by Morikuni

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Tanyū. Monju Bosatsu

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a painting by Hoitsu

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a painting by Bunchō. Mizunoya Tennō

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a woodcut by Hokusai

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Shotetsu. Monju *Bosatsu*  
*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai  
*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Meicho. The *Arhat*  
*Permission of "Kokka."*

## CHAPTER IX

### THE LION (*continued*)

From a Japanese bronze  
*T. Z. Shiota, San Francisco.*

From a woodcut by Sadatoshi. The *Kara-shishi* and Wave  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese porcelain plate. The Hundred Lions  
*Miss Clay's, San Francisco.*

From a Korean mortuary figure  
*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a woodcut by Shunboku. The *Kara-shishi* and Wind  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Korean mortuary figure  
*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a Mohammedan *Tugra*  
*Permission of "Journal of Indian Art and Industry."*

From a Japanese bronze  
*Permission of "Japanese Temples and Their Treasures."*

From a Chinese roof-tile  
*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a Japanese bronze  
*Permission of "Japanese Temples and Their Treasures."*

From a Mohammedan *Tugra*  
*Permission of "Journal of Indian Art and Industry."*

From a Chinese roof-tile  
*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a Chinese teak-wood carving  
*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From the carvings of the *Karamon* of Hongwanji, Kyōto.  
*Permission of "Japanese Temples and Their Treasures."*

From the statue of Kongō Kokuzō *Bosatsu*, Kwanchi-in temple, Kyōto  
*Permission of "Japanese Temples and Their Treasures."*

From a Chinese teak-wood carving  
*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a Japanese bronze statue of Dai-nichi Nyorai  
*T. Z. Shiota, San Francisco.*

## CHAPTER X

## THE ELEPHANT

From a painting by Kakunen

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese embroidery

*The Daibutsu, San Francisco.*

From a Chinese porcelain

*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a Chinese bronze

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese porcelain

*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a Chinese embroidery

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese bronze

*T. Z. Shiota, San Francisco.*

From a coloured woodcut by Masayoshi

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Morikuni

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Shigenobu

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Eitoku

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai

*Author's Collection.*

From a Mohammedan *Tugra*

*Permission of "Journal of Indian Art and Industry."*

From an Indian painting. Suffering with Colic

*Permission of "Journal of Indian Art and Industry."*

From a Hindu Sculpture. Ganesha.

*Permission of "Ideals of Indian Art," Ernest B. Havell.*

From an Indian painting. A Combat of Elephants

*Permission of "Journal of Indian Art and Industry."*

From an Indian painting. Suffering with Headache

*Permission of "Journal of Indian Art and Industry."*

From a Mohammedan *Tugra*

*Permission of "Journal of Indian Art and Industry."*

From an Indian drawing. Ganesha

*Permission of "The Gods of India" E. Osborne Martin.*

## CHAPTER XI

### THE ELEPHANT (*continued*)

From a sculpture on a Jain stūpa

*Permission of "A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon," Vincent A. Smith.*

From a Japanese painting, Kamakura era. Fugen *Bosatsu*

*T. Z. Shiota, San Francisco.*

From a Japanese painting by Setsusen. Fugen *Bosatsu*

*T. Z. Shiota, San Francisco.*

From a Chinese painting attributed to Ma Lin. P'u-hsien *P'u-sa*

*Nathan Bentz & Co., San Francisco.*

From a Japanese painting by Setsusen. Monju *Bosatsu*

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese painting, Kamakura era. Monju *Bosatsu*

*T. Z. Shiota, San Francisco.*

From a Chinese painting attributed to Wu Tao-tzū. Wên-shu *P'u-sa*

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a Chinese bronze. Wên-shu *P'u-sa*

*T. Z. Shiota, San Francisco.*

From a woodcut in an old Japanese book. The Intoxicated Elephant

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese lacquer. Wên-shu *P'u-sa*

*Schussler Bros., San Francisco.*

From a Tibetan brass. P'u-hsien *P'u-sa*

*Mrs. W. S. Wood's Collection, San Francisco.*

From a Chinese lacquer. P'u-hsien *P'u-sa*

*Schussler Bros., San Francisco.*

From a painting by Shunshō. Eguchi no Kimi, the *Tayū*

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hogan Shuzan. Bringing the Elephant Tribute from Annam to China

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Eitaku. The *Tayū*

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hiroshige. The *Tayū*

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Goshun. The Poet Saigyō and the *Tayū*

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kason. The *Tayū*

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Morikuni

## CHAPTER XII

### THE BULL

From a painting by Kakunen

*Author's Collection.*

From black and white drawings by Sempō. The Song of the Ten Bulls

*Permission of "Transactions of Japan Society, London."*

From a Chinese porcelain. The Boy and the Bull

*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*



From a Japanese painting by Sōsen. The Boy and the Bull  
*Permission of "The Painters of Japan," Arthur Morrison.*

From a Chinese porcelain. Lao Tzū as the Boy on the Bull  
*The Daibutsu, San Francisco.*

From a Japanese painting by Tanryō. The Philosopher Adrift  
*Permission of "The Open Court."*

From a Chinese lacquer. Lao Tzū on His Bull  
*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kyōsai. Daikoku Impersonating the *Sennin Chōkwarō*  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese painting by Gekkō. The Young Nature-Lover  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese painting by Yen Tz'ü-ping. Xing Ch'i Riding a Bullock  
*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige. Sugawara no Michizane Riding His Black Bullock  
*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Utamaro. The Herdsman and the Weaver  
*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Herdsman and the Weaver  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese lacquer. Chih Niu, the Weaver  
*Permission of "Transactions of Japan Society, London."*

From a woodcut by Utamaro. Crossing the Bridge of Magpies  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese lacquer. Ch'ien Niu, the Herdsman  
*Permission of "Transactions of Japan Society, London."*

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE BULL (*continued*)

From a Japanese painting by Toba Sōjō  
*Permission of "Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art," Ernest S. Fenollosa.*

From a Japanese scroll-painting by Mitsunobu. Kitano Tenjin  
*Permission of "Japanese Temples and Their Treasures."*

From a Chinese painting: Homeward Bound  
*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a Chinese painting on woven paper by the Emperor K'ang Hsi. Ploughing.  
*Permission of "Chinese Pictorial Art," E. A. Strehlneck.*

From a Japanese scroll-painting of Kamakura period. Crossing the Ōsaka Pass in Winter  
*Permission of "Japanese Temples and Their Treasures."*

From a Chinese painting. Returning from the Chase  
*Permission of "Kokka."*

From an extended drawing of the Vaphio cup  
*Permission of "Childhood of Art," Herbert G. Spearing.*

From a photograph of the Vaphio cup  
*Permission of "Childhood of Art," Herbert G. Spearing,*

From a pen-and-ink drawing. The *Tauroctonus* or Bull-Slaying Mithra.

*Permission of "Open Court."*

From an Indian painting. Indra with Indrānī, Worshipping Sivā, with Pārvatī and Ganesha

*Permission of "The Gods of India," E. O. Martin.*

From an Indian painting. Sri Krishna Playing the Flute for the Milkmaids

*Permission of "Rajput Painting," Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.*

From an extended drawing of the Vaphio cup

*Permission of "Childhood of Art," Herbert G. Spearing.*

From a photograph of the Vaphio cup.

*Permission of "Childhood of Art," Herbert G. Spearing.*

From an Indian painting. Krishna, the Divine Cowherd, Sheltering Rādhā from the Rain

*Permission of "Rajput Painting," Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.*

From a Japanese painting of the Fujiwara period. Emma-ō, the King of Hell

*Permission of "Japanese Temples and Their Treasures."*

From an Indian painting. Yama, the God of Death

*Permission of "A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon," Vincent A. Smith.*

From a Tibetan painting. Yama, the God of Death

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese sculpture of the Fujiwara period. Emma-ō, The King of Hell

*Permission of "Japanese Temples and Their Treasures."*

From a Tibetan painting. Yamāntaka, the Conqueror of Death

*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE HORSE

From a woodcut by Keisai Masayoshi

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese painting by Eitoku

*Author's Collection.*

From an ink-rubbing of a Chinese bas-relief of the Han dynasty

*Author's Collection.*

From a sepulchral clay figure of the T'ang dynasty

*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From an ancient Korean mirror-back

*T. Z. Shiota, San Francisco.*

From a roof-tile of the Ming dynasty

*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From an ink-rubbing of a Chinese intaglio carving of the Chin dynasty

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese painting by Chou Shun *Arhats* Passing Through the Sea of Ignorance to the Shores of Wisdom.

*A. Falvy, San Francisco.*

From a woodcut by Itchō. Emma-ō Taking Jizō Fishing

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Tatsunobu. The Prolific Gourd

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese screen-painting by Tanyū

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Morikuni. Chōkwarō Conjuring His Horse from the Gourd

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Tange. Oguri Hangwan Reining His Horse Onikage on a Go Table

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Itchō. The Temple Offering

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Morikuni. *Kaibu*, the Wild Horses of the Sea

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Tsukioka Masanobu. The Warrior Nasu no Yoichi

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. Ko U Throwing the Wild Horse Usui

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Shigenobu. Kaneko, the Strong Woman

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Tsukioka Masanobu. Kumagaya Challenging Atsumori

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Eitoku. Horses

## CHAPTER XV

### THE DEER AND THE GOAT

From a woodcut by Saihō

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese screen-painting by Keibun

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From the seal of Hiroshige

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese painting by Sōsen

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From part of a Japanese screen-painting attributed to Eitoku

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a Japanese painting by Seihō

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Ch'ên Nan-p'in

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a Japanese painting by Shonen

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese screen-painting by Zeshin

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From an Indian painting. The Pet Deer

*Permission of "Rajput Painting," Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.*

From a Chinese porcelain. The Hundred Deer

*Permission of "Chinese Porcelain," W. G. Gulland.*

From a Japanese painting by Gekkō

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From an Indian painting. The Enchantress

*Permission of "Rajput Painting," Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.*

From a woodcut by Kōrin. Fukurokuju

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese woodcut. The Sennin Tsao Kuo and Pieh Tsao

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Itchō. Jurōjin

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Shigenobu. The Sennin Huang Ch'u-p'ing

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese painting by Hsieh Hsi-fan. The Three Goats of Peace

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese woodcut. The Sennin Wu Mêng

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Sensai. Ōkame

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese woodcut. The Sennin K'ao Yü

*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE MONKEY

From a painting by Kakunen

*Author's Collection.*

From a screen-painting by Gahō

*Permission of "Gahō Taikan."*

From a painting by Sōsen

*Permission of "The Painters of Japan," Arthur Morrison.*

From a painting by Tohaku

*Permission of "Kokka".*

From a screen-painting by Gahō

*Permission of "Gahō Taikan."*

From a painting by Tohaku

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a painting by Kotei

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Sōsen

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a carving attributed to Hidari Jingorō The Three Mystic Apes

*Photograph, Author's Collection,*

From a coloured woodcut by Shinsai. Bringing New Year's Greetings

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Kōan. The Foolish Monkey

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kyōsai

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Sōsen. Bearing the Sacred *Shintai*

*Author's Collection,*

From a woodcut by Itchō. The Travelling Showman

*Author's Collection.*

From an Indian painting by Venkatappa. Rāma Sending His Signet Ring to Sita by Hanumān

*Permission of "Myths of Hindus and Buddhists," Sister Nivedita and Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.*

From an Indian drawing. Hanumān with His Attributes

*Permission of "Hindu Mythology," W. J. Wilkens.*

From a fresco of the Indian Caves at Ajanta

*Permission of "A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon" Vincent A. Smith.*

From an Indian copper image. Hanumān

*Permission of "South Indian Bronzes," O. C. Gangoly*

From an Indian painting. The Siege of Lankā

*Permission of "Rajput Painting," Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.*

From an Indian painting by Venkatappa. Hanumān, with His Burning Tail, Setting Fire to Lankā

*Permission of "Myths of Hindus and Buddhists," Sister Nivedita and Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.*

From a Chinese porcelain. Sun Wu K'ung

*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE BOAR

From a painting by Kakunen

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Shigenobu

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Toyoharu. Yoritomo's Hunting Party Around the Base of Fuji no Yama

*Author's Collection.*

From a *surimono* by Sadaōka. A screen-painting of Nitta no Shirō Killing the Wild Boar

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Morikuni

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Ōkyo

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Shigemaru. Kintarō Hurling a Rock at a *Tengu*

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. UshiLaurence Piny on.waka in the *Tengu* Camp

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Sukenobu. Sōjōbō, the *Tengu* King Teaching Ushiwaka the Art of Fencing



*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Tsukioka Masanobu. Nitta no Shirō Killing the Wild Boar

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Shunshō. Kintarō Throwing a Wild Boar

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Gakutei. Sōjōbō Riding a Wild Boar

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. Marishi-ten

*Author's Collection.*

From a Tibetan drawing. The House-Devil

*Permission of "Buddhism of Tibet" L. A. Waddell.*

From a Japanese shrine-image. Marishi-deva

*Permission of "The Gods of Northern Buddhism," Alice Getty.*

From a Tibetan drawing. Mārīcī or Vārāhī

*Permission of "Buddhism of Tibet," L. A. Waddell.*

From a Japanese drawing. Marishi-ten

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese shrine-image. Marishi-deva.

From a woodcut by Morikuni. The Boar.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE FOX

From a painting by Kakunen

*Author's Collection.*

From a wood-carving. Inari Daimyōjin

*A. T. Komada, San Francisco.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. Dakinī-ten

*Author's Collection.*

From a stone image. Inari Temple Guardian

*Japanese Tea Garden, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco.*

From a woodcut by Kokusai. Ōjisan Inari

*Author's Collection.*

From a temple painting. Izuna Gongen

*T. Z. Shiota, San Francisco.*

From a stone image. Inari Temple Guardian

*Japanese Tea Garden, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco.*

From a coloured woodcut by Minkō. Carrying the Bride

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Toyokuni. The Dream

*Mrs. Dora Amsden Collection, San Francisco.*

From a painting by Shoūn. Lighting the Way for the Procession

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Kokusai. The Fox's Wedding Procession

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Suiyō. Going to the Temple

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige. Fox-lights on New Year's Eve

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Toyokuni. A Fox!

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kunisada. The Exposé of Tamamo no Mayé

*Author's Collection.*

From a composition by Hokusai. The Celestial Nine-tailed Fox

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Yeizan. Not Foxes

*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE BADGER AND THE BEAR

From a painting by Kakunen

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Shigenobu. Seeking a Victim

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hokusai. The Nocturne

*Author's Collection.*

From a bronze lantern holder

*Japanese Tea Garden, Golden Gate Parle, San Francisco.*

From a porcelain incense-burner

*G. T. Marsh & Co., San Francisco.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige. The Trap

*Author's Collection.*

From a bronze incense-burner

*Emerson Studios, San Francisco.*

From a sword-guard. The Badger Tea-kettle

*Collection of Pierre Barboutau, Paris.*

From a painting by Kyōsai. The Fleeing Teakettle

*Permission of "Japanese Art," Laurence Binyon.*

From a wood-carving. The Badger Priest

*G. T. Marsh & Co., San Francisco.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Startled Bonze

*Author's Collection.*

From a sword-guard. The Badger Serenade

*Permission of "Legend in Japanese Art," Henri L. Joly.*

From a porcelain incense-burner. The Badger Tea-kettle

*G. T. Marsh & Co., San Francisco.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Hunter and the Bear

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Shigemasa. Kintarō Ready for a Ride

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut, Ōsaka School. Koyama Hangwan in a Hunting Party

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Morikuni. After a Swim

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Tsukioka Masanobu. Kumagai Jirō Throwing the Bear

*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER XX

### THE CAT AND THE DOG

From a painting by Kōshōko

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Toyonobu

*Author's Collection.*

From a wood-carving by Hiclari Jingorō. The Sleeping Cat

*Permission of "Japanese Temples and Their Treasures."*

From a porcelain image. The Inviting Cat

*Permission of "Transactions of Japan Society, London."*

From an earthenware image. The Inviting Cat

*Permission of "Transactions of Japan Society, London."*

From a coloured woodcut by Koryūsai

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Yuho. The Cat and Peony

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Kyōsai. Off for a Ride

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Kyōsai. Serving His Mistress

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Kansi. Studying Her Rôle

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. The Goblin Cat of Okabe

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Kyōsai. In Complete Subjection

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. Kamata Matahachi Slaying a *Neko-mata*

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Rosetsu. A Pair of Puppies

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a painting by Ōkyo. Puppies and Morning-glory Blossoms

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a painting by Kōga. Dog-boxes

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From *papier-mâché* images. The Puppy Protectors

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kōrin. Puppies with Morning-glory Blossoms

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE HARE, THE SQUIRREL AND THE RAT

From a painting by Chiura

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Shūzan

*Reproduction, Author's Collection,*

From a drawing by Chiura

*Author's Collection,*

From a painting by Chmra. Through the Wave

*Author's Collection,*

From an ancient temple painting. Jōgaisho, the Remover of Obstacles

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Itchō. Kintarō as Umpire

*Permission of "Japanese Art," Laurence Binyon.*

From a painting by Chiura

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting attributed to Shōga Takuma. Gwa-ten Shi, the Moon Deva

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a painting by Sesshō

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Itchō. Squirrels on Grapevine

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Itchō. The Attributes of Daikoku

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Senrei. Carrying Away the Booty

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. A New Year's Feast

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Gekkō. Ready for Service

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. Enjoying the New Year's Decorations

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. Daikoku's Workmen

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Keisai Masayoshi

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Utamaro. Daikoku, the God of Wealth

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Youthful Sesshū

*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE SERPENT

From a drawing by Chiura

*Author's Collection.*

From a drawing by Francisco Cornejo. Toltec Feathered Serpents

*Francisco Cornejo Collection, San Francisco.*

From a drawing by William Baake. A Maya Feathered Serpent

*Permission of "A Sculptured Vase from Guatemala," Museum of the American Indian, New York City.*

From a stone-carving. The Abhayagiri Nāga

*Permission of "Journal of Indian Arts."*

From a drawing by Francisco Cornejo. The Aztec Calendar.

*Francisco Cornejo Collection, San Francisco.*

From a Hindu brass candlestick. The Hooded Cobra

*Jalanivich & Olsen Collection, San Francisco.*

From a drawing by Herbert J. Spinden. The Divine Serpent

*Permission of "A Study of Maya Art" Herbert J. Spinden.*

From a Hindu candlestick. A Useful Nāga

*Permission of "The Gods of Northern Buddhism," Alice Getty.*

From a Jain statue. The Ārya Buddha.

*Mrs. Frank C. Havens' Collection, San Francisco.*

From an Indian statue. Buddha, Ninth Avatār of Vishnu

*Permission of "The Gods of Northern Buddhism," Alice Getty.*

The Ārya Buddha. Rear View

*Mrs. Frank C. Havens Collection, San Francisco.*

From a Korean fresco. Fu Hsi and His Consort Nü Kua

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From an Indian statue. Buddha Protected by Muchilinda

*Permission of "The Gods of Northern Buddhism," Alice Getty.*

From a Hindu Decoration. A Nāga and Nāginī

*Permission of "Buddhist Art in India," Albert Grünwedel.*

From a Hindu painting. The Grateful Nāginī

*Permission of "Rajput Painting," Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.*

From a Hindu wood-carving. Vishnu Reclining on Sesha-nāga

*M. H. De Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco.*

From a Hindu wood-carving. Krishna on Kālīya

*Mrs. Frank C. Havens Collection, San Francisco.*

From a Hindu painting. Krishna Quelling Kālīya

*Permission of "Rajput Painting," Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.*

From a Hindu painting. The Āsāvarī Rāginī.

*Permission of "Rajput Painting" Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.*

From a Hindu statue. The Submission of Kālīya

*Permission of "South Indian Bronzes," O. C. Gangoly.*

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE SERPENT (*continued*), THE TOAD AND THE FROG

From a painting by Chiura

*Author's Collection.*

From a bronze sword-guard

*Collection of Pierre Barboutau, Paris,*

From a bronze jointed serpent

*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a bronze image of a votive offering. Serpent and Pine Tree.

*Nan Kee, San Francisco.*

From a painting by Chiharu. The *Genjōraku* "Snake-seeing Dance."

*Author's Collection.*

From a bronze sword-guard

*Permission of "Le Japon Artistique," S. Bing.*

From a bronze temple-picture by Tomonobu, in wooden frame by Tōkōsai

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a Japanese painting of the Kamakura period. Benzai-ten of the Marvellous Voice

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a Japanese painting by Tanyū. Kwannon of the Lotus

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese painting by Mu Ch'i *Arhat* with Serpent, in Meditation

*Permission of "Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art," Ernest S. Fenallosa.*

From a Japanese painting by Sesshū. Kwannon of the Dragon

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese painting by Yeisen. Fūchō Myō-ō Appearing to the Youthful Chō Densu

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kōchō. A Group of Immortals

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese painting by Bairei. Seeking a Lotus Throne

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese painting by Chō Densu. Gama *Sennin*

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a Chinese woodcut. The Immortal Toad

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese painting by Kyōsai. Turning the Tables

*Permission of Japanese Art, Laurence Binyon.*

From a printed temple *mamori*. A Japanese *Nāga*

*Permission of "The Gods of Northern India," Alice Getty.*

From a coloured woodcut by Shigemasa. Ono no Tōfū

*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER XXIV

### SEA-FLOOR LIFE

From a painting by Chiura

*Author's Collection.*

From a *surimono*. New Year Offerings

*Author's Collection.*



From a bronze jointed figure

*The Daibutsu, San Francisco.*

From a *surimono* by Toyohiro. The *Ebi Takarabune*

*Author's Collection.*

From a lacquered shell-shaped bowl

*Author's Collection.*

From a *surimono*. New Year Offerings

*Author's Collection.*

From a *surimono* by Yūshin. The Actor Danjūrō V

*Author's Collection.*

From the real crab. A *Heike-gani*

*O. Kai a; Co., San Francisco.*

From a coloured triptych by Kuniyoshi. The Ghosts of the Heike Attacking Yoshitsune's Ship at Omono no Oki

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. The *Ama* Battling with the Dragon

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hokusai

*Author's Collection.*

From a bronze jointed figure

*Nathan Bentz & Co., San Francisco.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. The Warrior Shimamura Danjō Takanori

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured triptych by Utamaro. The *Awabi*-shell Divers at Ise

*Mrs. Dora Amsden Collection, San Francisco.*

From a *surimono*. *Kai-awase* Shells

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hokusai. A Successful *Ama*

*Author's Collection.*

From a porcelain plaque. The Mirage of the *Hamaguri*

*G. T. Marsh & Co., San Francisco.*

From a coloured triptych by Toyokuni II. Gathering *Awabi* at Futami Beach

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Nagahide. The Bittern and Mussel

*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE FISH

From a painting by Chiura

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige *Ayu*

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Keibun

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Tokugen. Leaping the Waterfall

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige *Koi*

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Keisai Yeisen. Leaping the Waterfall

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Yoshitoshi. The Surprise

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige. The Carp Flag

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kōrin. The *Sennin* Kinkō.

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a *surmiono* by Shunman. Fish Head and Bean Measure

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Taitō. After a Fly

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kuniteru. A Vain Endeavour

*Author's Collection.*

From a *surimono* by Gakutei. *Fugu* Fish and Plum Blossoms

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Yoshitoshi. Kintarō's First Feat

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. Gyoran Kwannon

*Author's Collection.*

From a triptych by Kuninaga. Beauties Impersonating the Eight Immortals

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Sesshō. Ebisu the Fisherman

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. Gyoran Kwannon Appearing to Usuyuki-hime

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Harunobu. Reading a Love-letter

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hokusai. The *Sennin* Shiyei

*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE FISH (*continued*)

From a Maya decoration. Drawn by Chiura

*Author's Collection*

From an Egyptian statue. Isis, Horus and the Fish

*Permission of "Ancient Pagan and Modern Christian Symbolism," Thomas Inman.*

From a Peruvian design

*Permission of "Peruvian Art," Charles W. Mead.*

From a Maya decoration. Drawn by Francisco Cornejo

*Francisco Cornejo Collection, San Francisco.*

From a Greek vase. Apollo Flying Over the Ocean

*Permission of "Open Court."*

From a Hindu stone image. Matsya, Vishnu's Fish Incarnation.

*Permission of "Journal of Indian Art and Industry."*

From a Peruvian design

*Permission of "Peruvian Art," Charles W. Mead.*

From an Assyrian sculpture. A Fish Deity

*Permission of "Open Court."*

From a Hindu sculpture. Vishnu's First Avatār

*Permission of "Open Court."*

From a Greek bowl. Dionysus Riding on a Fish

*Permission of "Open Court."*

From an ancient Chinese book. Yü, a Symbol of Happy Augury

*Author's Collection.*

From an ink-rubbing of a bas-relief of the Han tombs. The Battle of the Fishes

*Author's Collection.*

From a wooden incense-holder, closed. The Kongō Butsu

*Mission Inn Museum, Riverside, California.*

From a wooden fish-gong. The Hanteki

*The Diabutsu, San Francisco.*

From an ancient Chinese book Yü, a Symbol of Happy Augury

*Author's Collection.*

From a wooden incense-holder, open. The Kongo Butsu

*Mission Inn Museum, Riverside, California.*

From a drawing by Hokusai. A Grampus of Ye do Castle

*Author's Collection.*

From a triptych by Kuniyoshi. Asahina's Test of Strength

*Author's Collection.*

From a drawing by Hokusai. Caught by an Octopus

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Toyokuni. The Love Struggle

*Author's Collection.*

From a porcelain image. The Carp Dragon

*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE CHASE

From a painting by Chiura

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Toyohiro. The Shōgun Yoritomo Freeing the Cranes

*Author's Collection.*

From a gold brocade. Honourable Lord Crane

*Permission of "The Ornamental Arts of Japan," George A. Audsley.*

From a coloured woodcut. The Hundred Cranes

*Author's Collection*

From a painting by Kōrin

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Ōkyo. The Crane's Nestlings

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Harunobu. Her Love-letter

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. The *Shimadai*

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige. Crane on Wave

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. One Line Sketches

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Koryūsai. A Beauty as Jurōjin

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Keisai Yeisen. Going to *Hōraizan*

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut signed Isshō Shijin. Jurōjin

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. One Line Sketches

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hokusai. Cranes and Young Pines

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Keisai Yeisen. Homeward

*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE FALCON

From a painting by Chiura

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Morikuni

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Gahō Hashimoto

*Permission of "Gahō Taikan."*

From a coloured woodcut by Hichō

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hokusai. The *Ōdori*

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Hisanobu

*Permission of "Japanese Art," Laurence Binyon.*

From a woodcut by Morikuni

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Harunobu

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige

*Author's Collection.*

From woodcuts by Kyōsai taken from the EHON TAKA KAGAMI, “*Mirror of Hawks*”

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Harunobu

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Gekkō

*Author's Collection.*

From an embroidery for a *fukusa*

*Permission of “Pictorial Arts of Japan,” William Anderson.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kiyomasu

*Author's Collection.*

From a triptych by Utamaro. The New Year's Outing

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Harunobu. The Young Samurai

*Author's Collection,*

From an *Ōtsu-ye Fuji Musume*

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai *San puku*, “Three Lucky Things “

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Koryūsai. A New Year's Sportsman

*Author's Collection.*

From a triptych by Kuniyoshi. Matabei Painting *Otsu-ye*

*Author's Collection.*

From an *Ōtsu-ye*. The *Takajō*

*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER XXIX

### THE PEACOCK

From a painting by Chiura

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Tessan Mori

*Permission of “Kokka.”*

From a painting by Toriyama Sekiyen

*Permission of “Japanese Art” Laurence Binyon.*

From a colour-print by Hicho

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Ganku

*Permission of “Kokka.”*

From a painting by Tessan Mori

*Permission of “Kokka.”*

From a painting by Ganku

*Permission of “Kokka”.*

From a colour-print by Hiroshige

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Maruyama Ōkyo

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a screen-painting by Maruyama Ōkyo

*Permission of "Painters of Japan" Arthur Morrison.*

From a painting of the Fujiwara period. Kujaku Myō-ō

*Permission of "Kokka".*

From a painting by Soken Yamaguchi

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a wooden statue of the Kamakura period. Kujaku Myō-ō

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a Hindu painting by Jagannath

*Permission of "A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon," Vincent A. Smith.*

## CHAPTER XXX

### THE COOK

From a painting by Chiura

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Bihō

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a screen-painting by Kwatei Taki. A Spring Scene

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a painting by Jakuchi

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Taitō

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kohō

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese painting by Sê Hsiang

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese porcelain. K'ang Hsi period

*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From Japanese bronzes *Ondori ni Mendori*

*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a Japanese painting

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese ivory carving. The *Onagadori*

*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From an embroidered *fukusa*. The Drum of Peace

*Permission of "The Ornamental Arts of Japan," George A. Audsley.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kunisada. Enticing Amaterasu from the Cave

*Mrs. Dora Amsden's Collection, San Francisco.*

From a coloured woodcut by Koryūsai

*Author's Collection.*



From a coloured woodcut by Yeizan. Playing *Osairei*  
*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Taitō. The Cock and Drum  
*Author's Collection.*

From a *surimono* by Hokkei  
*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Kyōsen. The *Onagadori*  
*Imperial Museum, Tōkyō.*

## CHAPTER XXXI

### WATER-FOWL

From a painting by Chiura  
*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Keinen *Oshi-dori*  
*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a screen-painting by Kwatei Taki. An Autumnal Evening  
*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a colour-print by Hiroshige *Kamo*  
*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Ōkyo *Kamo*  
*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a painting by Sōbun *Oshi-dori*  
*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by *Oshi-dori*  
*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a colour-print by Hiroshige *Oshi-dori*  
*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Sotatsu  
*Permission of "Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art," Ernest F. Fenollosa.*

From a colour-print by Keisai Yeisen. The Lure of the Moon  
*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Shikō  
*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a woodcut by Hokusai  
*Author's Collection.*

From a colour-print by Sugakudō  
*Author's Collection.*

From a colour-print by Hiroshige  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese wooden image. *Kokuzō*  
*Permission of "Japanese Temples and Their Treasures."*

From Japanese wooden sculptures. The Five *Kokuzō*  
*Permission of "Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art," Ernest F. Fenollosa.*

From a Chinese lacquer. The Sacred Duck  
*Author's Collection.*

From a Hindu painting by Venkatappa. The Return of Rāma

*Permission of "Myths of the Hindus and Buddhists" Sister Nivedita and Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.*

From a Hindu painting. Sarasvatī

*Permission of "The Gods of India," E. Osborne Martin.*

From a Hindu painting by Mazumdar. Damayantī and the Swan.

*Permission of "Myths of the Hindus and Buddhists," Sister Nivedita and Ananda Coomaraswamy.*

From a Chinese stone-carving. The Sacred Duck

*Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER XXXII

### THE CROW AND THE SNOWY HERON

From a painting by Chiura

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Koryūsai. The Midday Meal

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kohō

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kyōsai. Crow, Moon and Plum Blossoms

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Kiyōōku. The Evening Rain:

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Morikuni

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Bihō

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. Three Emblems of Purity

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Koryūsai. The Contrasting Pair

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Shōtei. Crows in a Snow Scene

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting of the Kanō School. The Saintly Heron in Deep Meditation

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kōrin. In Search of Small Game

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Gyokuden. Herons in a Snow Scene

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Ōkyo. About to Make a Landing

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. A tengu Cock Fight

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Yeizan. Ushiwaka's Lesson in Fencing

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kangyo. The Winter Flight of Tokiwa Gozen

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured triptych by Kuniyoshi. Yoshi-tsune Overcoming Benkei on Gojō Bridge

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Troubled Dream of Hōjō Takatoki

*Author's Collection.*

From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. Tokiwa Guided by the White Herons

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Gyoka. The Crow and Plum Tree

*Japanese Tea Garden, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco.*

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### THE CUCKOO AND OTHER BIRDS

From a painting by Chiura

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai *Chidori* and Wave

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting *Shijō* School. Among the Water Plants

*Author's Collection.*

From a colour-print by Hiroshige. The Cuckoo and Rain

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Hokusai. The Swallow and Willow

*Catalogue of Exhibition of Paintings of Hokusai, Tōkyō, 1900.*

From a woodcut *Kōrin* School. The Swallow and Wave

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Mu Ch'i. The Swallow and Willow

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a colour-print by Hiroshige *Chidori* and Wave

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kōkō-jo. The Tongue-cut Sparrow

*Mrs. Kyntarō Abiko Collection, San Francisco.*

From a painting by Bairei. Quail

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Mokutei. The Sparrow and Snow-laden Bamboo

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kohō. Ready for the Quest

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Katei. Quail

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kōtei. Bullfinch and Bamboo Trees.

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a painting by Bunki. In a Thoughtful Mood

*Harden's Old Book Shop, San Francisco.*

From a colour-print by Hiroshige. The Kingfisher and Iris

*Author's Collection.*

From a design by Kōrin. The Nightingale and Plum Blossom

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Furukuni. The Nightingale and Plum Blossom

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Furukuni

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a colour-print by Genki. The Bullfinch and Morning-glory

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Gesshū

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Hōyen. Plum Branch and Nightingales

*Permission of "Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art," Ernest F. Fenollosa.*

From a painting by Gyokuden.

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### THE BAT AND THE BUTTERFLY

From a painting by Chiura

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese gift-box. The *Wu fu* Emblem

*Henry H. Hart, San Francisco.*

From a Chinese carving for a key hanger. A Conventional Bat.

*Henry H. Hart, San Francisco.*

From a Japanese woodcut *Jitsu-getsu*

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese towel. Bats, Moon and Longevity Character

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese gift-box lid. A Bat and Cloud Motive

*Mrs. Winifred Maxwell Collection, San Francisco.*

From a Chinese brocade. A Blessing Symbol

*Henry H. Hart, San Francisco.*

From a Chinese porcelain disc. The *Pa-kwa*

*Permission of "Chinese Art Motives," Winifred Reed Treadwell.*

From a Chinese painting. A Sage Studying the *Wu fu* Emblem

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese rug. Bat, Cloud and Longevity Symbols

*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a Chinese painting. Shou Lao, the God of Longevity

*The Mandarin Importing Co., San Francisco.*

From a woven Manchu hat streamer. Bat and *Swastika* pattern.

*The Daibutsu, San Francisco.*

From an embroidered Manchu hat steamer. A Butterfly Pattern.

*The Daibutsu, San Francisco.*

From a Chinese painting. The Immortal Lan Ts'ai-hou

*The Mandarin Importing Co., San Francisco.*

From a Chinese rug. Butterfly, Flower and Lion Design

*S. & G. Gump Co., San Francisco.*

From a Japanese painting by Tanyū. Butterflies and Peonies

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From Chinese paintings. Butterflies and Flowers Representing the Four Seasons

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese woodcut. The Butterfly Dance

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese painting. Butterflies and Flowers

*Author's Collection,*

From a Japanese colour-print by Toyokuni. Butterflies and Chrysanthemums

*Author's Collection.*

From a Japanese *surimono*. A Butterfly Dance Costume

*Author's Collection.*

From a Chinese silk and gold brocade. Bat and Longevity Symbols

*Nathan Bentz & Co., San Francisco.*

## CHAPTER XXXV

### THE DRAGON-FLY AND OTHER INSECTS

From a painting by Chiura

*Author's Collection.*

From a colour-print by Fusui. Dragon-fly and Water Plants

*Author's Collection.*

From a colour-print by Umpō. Dragon-fly and Iris

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kyōsai. An Insect Cortège

*Permission of "Pictorial Arts of Japan," William Anderson.*

From a painting by Kyōsai. A Test of Strength

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Shōga. Insects and Autumn Leaves

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a colour-print by Hokusai. Cricket and Cucumber Vine

*Author's Collection.*

From a woodcut by Hokusai. Mantis and Melon Vine

*Author's Collection.*

From a *surimono*. Two Things of Summer

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kwazan. Cockscomb and Insects

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a painting by Utamaro. Cricket and Pumpkin Vine

*Permission of "Le Japon Artistique," S. Bing.*

From a woodcut by Shugetsu. Cricket and Bean Vine

*Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Motonobu. Cockscomb and Dragon-fly

*Permission of "Kokka."*

From a painting by Beisen. Cageed Cricket and Morning-glory Vine

*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a colour triptych by Kuniyoshi. Raikō under the Spell of the Demon Spider  
*Author's Collection.*

From a painting. Serenading the Moon  
*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a lacquer box lid. Captive Blossoms  
*Permission of "L'Art Japonais," Louis Gonse, Paris.*

From a painting by Shōbu. Insects and Autumn Leaves  
*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting by Kōsho. Lighting the Moor  
*Reproduction, Author's Collection.*

From a painting. Terrorizing a Victim  
*Permission of the "San Francisco Examiner," San Francisco.*

From a *surimono* by Kyōrin. Cricket and Hagi Plant  
*Author's Collection.*



# ANIMAL MOTIFS IN ASIAN ART

*An Illustrated Guide to Their Meanings and Aesthetics*

## CHAPTER I

# THE DRAGON

*Great monarch of the air,  
Exhale thy magic breath!  
Shape whirling clouds  
With moisture charged.  
With rain refresh the earth.*



From a painting by Kakunen

THE animal in art occupies as important a place in the Orient as the portrayal of the human species or the representation of the beautiful in the realm of natural scenery. For, since the dawn of human intelligence, its kingdom has played a serious part in the varied systems of philosophy and religion which have ministered to the welfare and contentment of mankind.

In the arts of savagery may be found examples of Totemism, which appears to have been practised as early as Tree Worship, one having been associated with the polity of these primitive peoples and the other with their devotional life.

Animals were chosen—as the distinguishing device of a family clan or tribe—whose characteristics in some way expressed the qualities deemed worthy of emulation, or which bore some relation to the particular country in which these races dwelt.

The animal selected for this high office was protected and reverently regarded, becoming not only a dominant factor in all the affairs of life, but also an ever-present icon, which—due to its being wrought in enduring stone—has often been preserved, thereby furnishing an invaluable means for unravelling mysteries of the past.

Such totems were the symbols not only of particular groups of people, but also of their chiefs and rulers, a fact which is of value to the student of archæology in tracing the common origin of nations. An example having a bearing upon this subject may be found in the history of the ancient Mayan civilization, as revealed by explorations in Central America of a comparatively recent date. There, a study of the traditions of the different nations, in conjunction with the interpretation of the arts of antiquity found during the excavations, has not only furnished convincing proof of a civilization as remote as 11,500 B.C., but has shown that the serpent was, even at that early time, as much a nation's

emblem as is the eagle of our own Republic; and, that it was also the particular blazon of their king, just as the dragon was China's national emblem as well as the insignia of the Emperor.



From a woodcut. Astrological Figures Representing the Four Quadrants of the Chinese Uranoscope

The selection of the serpent of Mayach was due to the resemblance of the form of the country to a local reptile, the head of which was identical with the peninsula of Yucatan and the tail with the southern continent; and that it was no ordinary serpent, but one apparently akin to the oriental dragon, is evident from the tradition which credits it with having not only both fins and wings, but a “green back—from its verdant forests that cover the domain; a yellow body—from its internal fires that cause its surface to wriggle like a serpent; a blue crown—from the azure canopy of the overhanging heavens; wings—from the smoke of its volcanoes, and fins—from its lofty mountain peaks.”



From a Chinese tapestry. The Walking Dragon

It is further interesting to note that while the serpent was the totem of the nation, it was also the insignia of its ruler; for the word *can*, by which his title was designated, was also the Mayan word for serpent, just as to this day *khan* is the title of the kings of Tartary, Burma and other Asiatic countries where Serpent Worship—another of the great primitive religions—prevailed for many centuries.



From an ink rubbing of a bas-relief of the Han dynasty. Fu-Hsi and His Consort Nü Kua, with Attendants

The thought of the transition from *can* to *khan* and then to *king* may well entice the archaeological speculator, while the connection of ancient China with the Mayan civilization offers opportunities for serious investigation. There are many evidences pointing to such a conclusion, the Chinese themselves having a tradition that a settlement had been made in their country by a tribe coming from the west.



From a drawing by Chiura. The Dragon Horse of the River Lo

Another indication of China's connection with a still more remote civilization lies in the absence of any relics of a primitive art, since its oldest specimens are a highly evolved and mature product, implying that they were imported from some other country.



From a Chinese enamel. The Birth of the Dragon

Then, again, a clue in this direction is offered by the Chinese legend relating to Hsi Wang Mu, the Royal Mother of the West.

Why the West and whence? Could the West have been the lost continent of Atlantis where, we are told, in the dim past flourished a great civilization now buried under the waters of the Atlantic Ocean?

From Plato we learn that this empire included three great islands. The North America and South America of to-day, and Mu. "Mu" the very name of the Royal Mother of the West. And did not this empire lie to the west of China? This Island of Mu was thought to have included Central America and Yucatan; the latter, now definitely known as the locality of ancient Mayach, is at present the source of much information regarding the history of a great past.

That not only China, but Hindustan, Egypt and Babylonia were colonies of this ancient civilization is an assumption derived from recent investigations in our own country. One evidence pointing to such a premise is the discovery in both Egypt and Mayach of the same hieroglyph, which in both countries had the same meaning—"Land of the West."

Then again, from the ancient sculptures and paintings which adorn the walls and palaces at Chichen Itza and Uxmal, the following is taken: "King Can, a serpent, founder of these cities, had three sons: Cay, a fish; Aac, a turtle; and Coh, a leopard; and two daughters: Moo, a macow; and Niete, a flower."



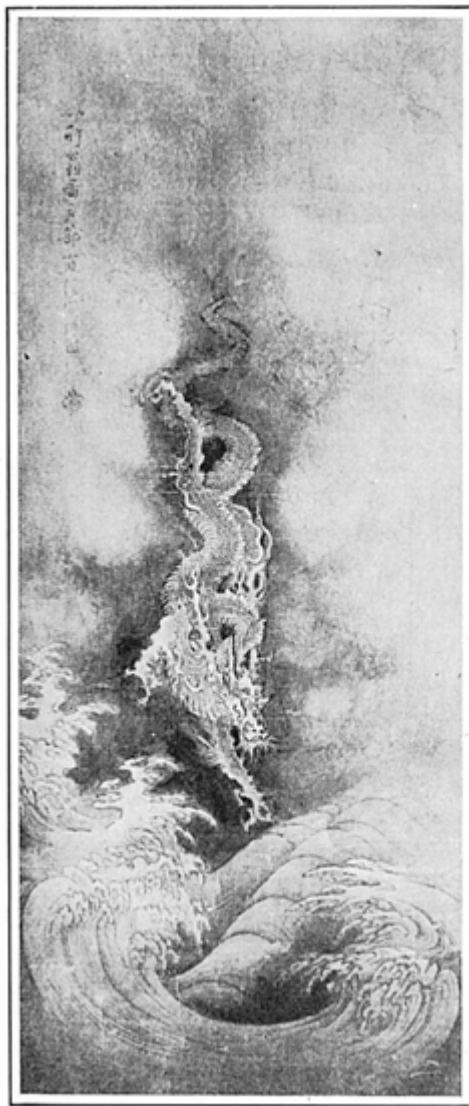
But what is of special interest is that Moo became Queen of Chichen, and after her death was worshipped as the goddess of fire in a magnificent temple built upon a great pyramid. In the same region there was another Queen Moo, who may some day be proved to be the original fairy of China. Has this presiding genius, migrating to a new country and there endowed with fresh attributes, become the Hsi Wang Mu of the Kw'ên Lun Mountains where grows the "Peach of Immortality" on the great cosmic tree, a tree which also may be a relic of another primitive religion—Tree Worship?

Another line of evidence to be followed lies in the mural drawings, paintings and stone engravings to be found in ancient tombs of China, representing legendary personages having bodies terminating as serpents or dragons. A notable example is given in one of the illustrations, in the stone rubbing taken from the sepulchral tablets of the shrines of the Wu family in which Fu-hsi, the mythical founder of the Chinese Empire (2960 B.C.), and his consort, Nü Kua, are represented with serpentine bodies intertwined.



From a Chinese tapestry. The Sitting Dragon

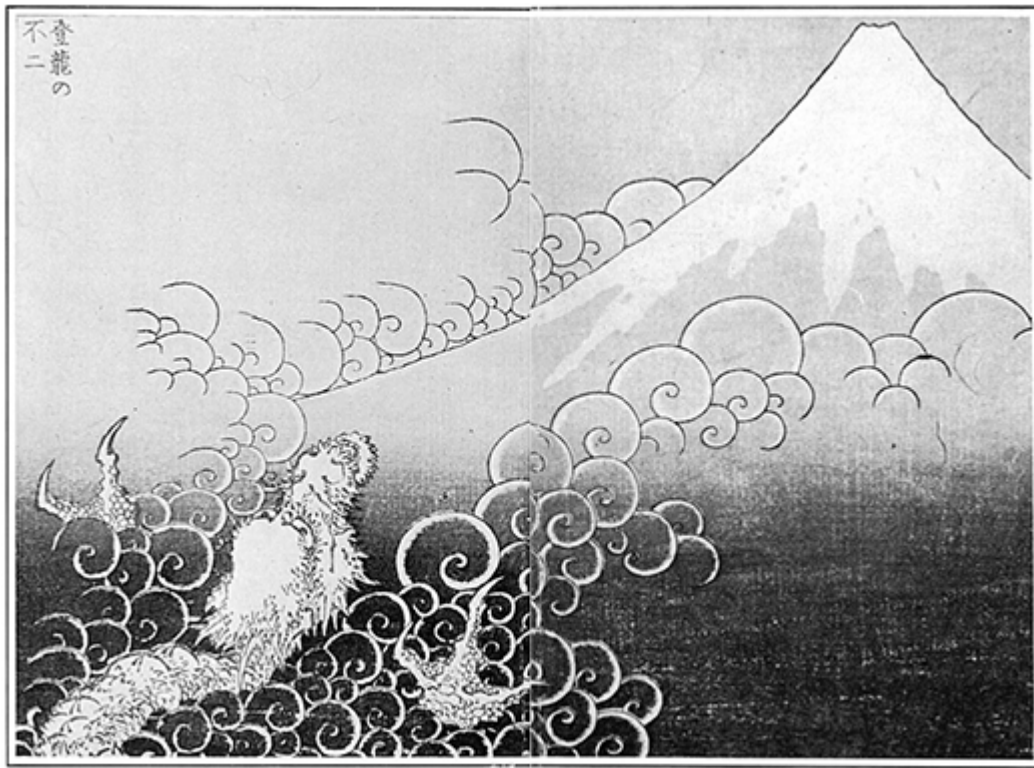
Such representations show Central Asiatic influence pointing to the *Nāgas* of India, who were originally serpent worshippers, but later, becoming converted to Buddhism, carried to the new faith the semi-divine beings, half human, half serpent, which are portrayed in many of the arts of antiquity.



From a painting by Naonobu. The Descending Dragon

The *Nāgas*, who were a Scythian tribe which overran India in the seventh century B.C., had a tradition that their mother country was Patalo—signifying a region under the earth. This has been interpreted to mean a locality antipodal to their own, thereby placing it in Central America, a theory which would make these people colonists of May ach.

Following this line of thought, we approach the dragon. Studying its manifold representations, we find no evidence of its having been evolved in China through the natural processes of growth, for it is structurally the same in the examples coming down from the dim past as it is in those of modern artists. Hence, it is logical to assume that it came to China as an adoption from some still more remote civilization, laden with all the symbology of the mother country. That it is a mythical beast, the creation of human imagination, there is no doubt, although ancient Chinese and Japanese books account for it zoologically. In fact, the given illustration—which includes the three varieties of dragons—is taken from a book entitled *DRAWINGS FROM NATURE* which describes the dragon as a real creature and King of the Scaly Tribes.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Ascending Dragon

Surveying the deductions of different writers upon this interesting subject we must conclude that the powerful factors in its fabrication were not only first Serpent Worship and later Sun Worship, but also those great sciences of hoary antiquity, astronomy and astrology. From both the study of the heavens and the human desire to know “the what and the wherefore of this earthly existence,” astrology—which has played so important a part in the life of the empire—had its inception. Seeking for causes and representing them symbolically led to the invention of a world of devices which, through the centuries, have been employed not only to teach philosophical lore but to beautify the art products of the nation.



From a Japanese stencil. The Dragon and Cloud



From a woodcut. The Whirling the Flying and the Fish Dragon

An interesting example of such symbology is to be found in the given illustration of an early uranoscope, the *Ssü Fang*, "Four Directions," which are represented by the *Ch'ing Lung*, "Blue



Dragon of the East”; the *Kuei Shên*, “Black Tortoise entwined with the Serpent,” also known as the “Sombre Warrior of the North”; the *Chu Ch’ieh*, “Vermilion Bird of the South”; and the *Pai Hu*, “White Tiger of the West.” But true to oriental customs—which ever reverse the occidental order—the south appears at the top of the map and the east at its left.

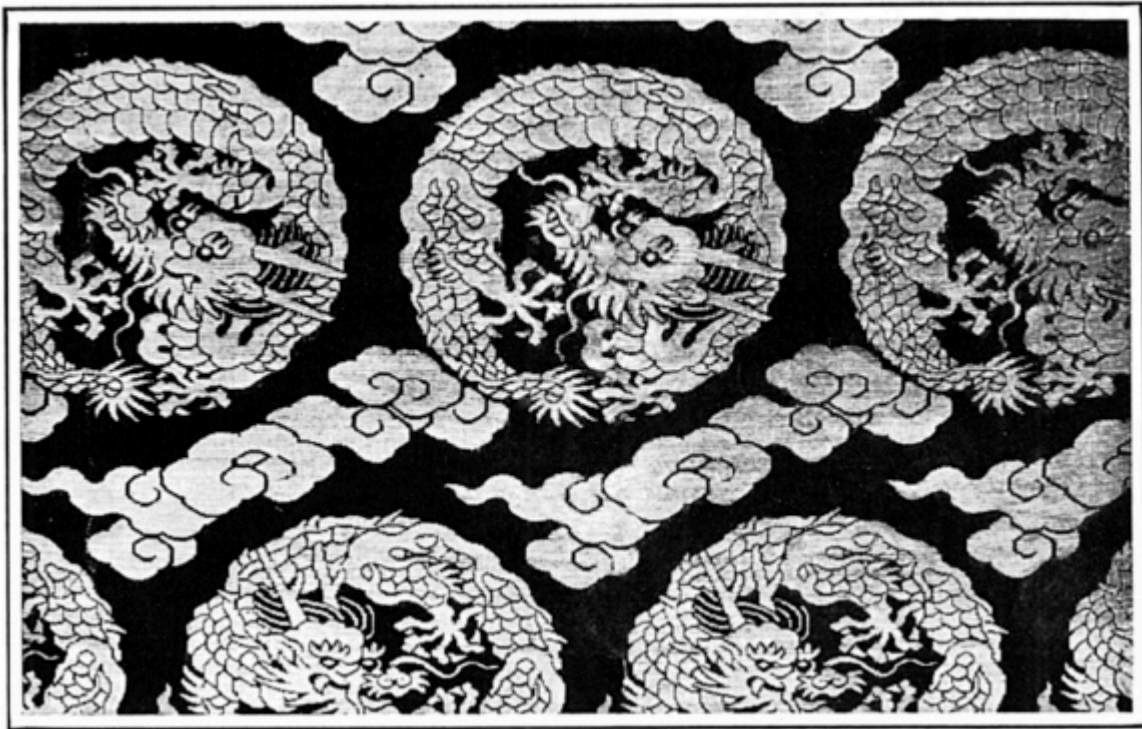


From a painting by Naonobu. The Ascending Dragon

Then, again, ancient books contain accounts of the *Ssü Ling*, “Four Fabulous Animals,” which control the destinies of the empire. These include the *Ling*, “Dragon”—chief of all scaly animals—which presides over authority; the *Fêng-huang*, “Phoenix”—chief of feathery animals—which presides over virtue; the *Ch’i-lin*, “Unicorn”—chief of all hairy animals—which presides over literature; the *Kuei*, “Tortoise”—chief of all the shelly animals—which presides over divination. These animals with man—who is said to be nude—constitute the five tribes of the quinary system of the ancient Chinese.

The dragon as previously stated is a mythical monster—a composite embodiment of the most terrible, imposing and powerful characteristics of a number of creatures—commonly described as having the head of a camel with horns of a deer, ears of an ox, eyes of a hare overshadowed by heavy bush eyebrows; a formidable beard with long streaming bristles; lengthy tusks; the body of a serpent covered with the scales of a fish, and topped with a bristling row of dorsal spines extending to and surrounding the mouth; a serpentine tail, terminating in a series of sharply pointed fins; four legs, with feet that combine the paw of the tiger and the talons of the hawk; and flamelike appendages emanating from the shoulders and hips. The scales of its body are limited to nine times nine, which is the most lucky of numbers, while those of its neck are placed in a reversed position from that of those of its body. Its claws vary in number according to its rank, the ordinary dragon having four, while the

one related to the Imperial household possesses five. In its head exists the *po-shan*, “foot rule,” without which it is unable to make a flight.



From a Japanese brocade. The Dragon and Cloud

In its throat it holds the *chu*, which is its chief possession and glory. From its body issue whirling flamboyant nebulæ filling the surrounding space.

Its breath is charged with fire and water, but generally it is converted into spiral clouds of beautiful pattern said to be the manifestation of active cosmic forces. Its wisdom and power supersede that of all other creatures, for it is able to assume unlimited transformations, ranging from so small a creature as a silkworm to a size large enough to cover the earth.

It ascends into the heavens at the spring equinox and descends into the river at the autumn equinox; hence it is known in Japanese art as *Nobori Ryū*, “Ascending Dragon,” and *Kudari Ryū*, “Descending Dragon,” examples of which are shown in the given illustrations. When seen soaring to the summit of the peerless Fuji no yama as in the print by Hokusai, it foretells the coming of great prosperity. But it appears only to the great, and then on rare occasions, when its great body is interwoven with the clouds of its own creation, for it is said that “no mortal may look upon its entire body and live.”



From a woodcut by Tango. Mugé Bringing the Jewel to Kamatari



From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. Mugé Pursued by the Dragon Hordes





The *Chu* of the Chinese.

Concerning its genesis, there are many traditions, one being expressed in what the Chinese term *Li yü tiao lung mên*, “The transformation of fishes into dragons.” This is claimed to have had its origin in the belief that all sturgeons which are able to pass the rapids of Lung Wên on their ascent of the Yellow River—whither they go for spawning purposes—are transformed into dragons. This figure of speech is particularly applied to students who successfully pass the examinations for literary honours, when they are said to *Ko Lung Mên*, “Leap the Dragon Gate.” In the accompanying illustration entitled “The Birth of the Dragon,” the gate referred to is shown inscribed with two characters of *Yü* and *mên*, that is *Yü gate*, “The Gate of Yü,” so called because it was constructed by the Emperor Yü—the founder of the Hsia dynasty (2205–1766 B.C.), who was styled “The Conqueror of the Flood.” Tradition relates that he spent nine years building a system of canals and cutting a pass through the Wu mountains, thereby liberating the waters of a flood that had devastated the country for several years. At the entrance to these canals he built a gate obstructing the passage of the fishes which, in order to return to the rivers, they were obliged to jump. Those succeeding became dragons and were called *li*. In like manner, the students who passed the Imperial examinations—for which a thousand presented themselves and in which barely a fifth succeeded—were said to have “Jumped the Gate of Yü.”



From a woodcut by Morikuni. Taishin-Ō Charming the Dragon



From a woodcut by Hokusai. Susano-o Killing the Eight-headed Serpent

Japan has many legends relating to dragons, which deal with a Dragon King—variously known as Ryūjin, Ryūjin Sama and Ryūō Kyo—who lives at the bottom of the sea in a wonderful palace called Ryūgū. His chief messenger—Ryūja or Hakuja—is shown as a small white serpent with a face of “an ancient of days” and carrying the Tide-ruling Jewels, while his minor attendants are represented as small *oni*, “demons,” with short horns.



From a coloured woodcut by Shigemasa. Takenouchi no Sukune Receiving the Tide Jewels

These legends generally refer to the Tide-compelling Jewels which are believed to contain the spiritual essence or operating principle of the universe. The dragon is ever in pursuit of one which is generally represented as a spiral-topped sphere from which emanates tongues of flame. To the Japanese it is known as the *hōju no tama*, “jewel of omnipotence,” while the Chinese call it a *chu*.

This jewel, which is regarded as the attribute of divinity, may be acquired by both man and animals, but only through the practice of the most fervent austerity continued for centuries. It is said to progress from its original gaseous state through a watery existence into a crystallized jewel of great luminosity and beauty. Originally Taoist, it was adopted by the Buddhists, becoming the most exalted of their symbols.



The *Hōju no Tama* of the Japanese.

A Japanese legend, known as *Mugé Hōju no Tama*, describes the theft of one of the Dragon King’s much-prized jewels and its recovery by the female diver, Mugé, a fisher girl. She swam to the Dragon Palace at the bottom of the sea, found the treasure and, although she was pursued by the dragon hordes, succeeded in returning it to its rightful owner, Kamatari. Two of the accompanying illustrations represent her hazardous undertaking.



From a woodcut by Morikuni. The Great Wu Tao-tzū Painting the Dragon

Another legend of this character which pertains to the Japanese Empress, Jingō Kōgō (A.D. 200–269), describes the conquest of Korea. In this it is related that through the good offices of the god of Kashima and Kasuga, the Dragon King presented to the Empress the *Kanji*, “Pearl of Ebb,” and the *Manji*, “Pearl of Flood.” Then when the Korean warships were arrayed for battle, the *Kanji* was thrown into the sea, causing the waters to sink and the dry land to appear. This opportunity the Koreans seized to attack the Japanese fleet. They therefore left their ships, but before they had proceeded very far the *Manji* was thrown upon the dry ocean bed, and immediately the waters rose again, entirely engulfing them. In the accompanying illustration, an emissary of the Dragon King is shown presenting the Tide Jewels to Takenouchi no Sukune, the prime minister of the Empress Jingō.

Again, in the legend entitled “The Happy Hunter,” there is a narrative of like character. This relates that Hiko-hohodemi lost a fishhook lent to him by his brother and later recovered it through the assistance of the Dragon King. The latter supplied for his homeward journey a crocodile steed, which proved to be none other than one of the daughters of Ryūjin, whom Hohodemi subsequently married and who is said to be the ancestor of the Mikados.

In the given illustration Toyotama-hime is impersonated by Taishinno, also known as Tai Chên Wang Fujên, who is charming a White Dragon with the dulcet strains of her one-stringed lute.

A dragon legend familiar to every child in Japan is that of *Yawata no Orochi*, also called *Uwabami*, “Eight-headed Serpent,” which echoes the ancient *Nāga* myth of a similar creature, and parallels the occidental fable of Perseus and Andromeda. Here we find Susano-o Mikoto—“The Impetuous Male and Ruler of the Tides”—rescuing Kushi Inada-hime from the jaws of an eight-headed monster, who annually collected a toll of a beautiful maiden. Susano-o, seeing the parents of the girl weeping, devised a plan for destroying the creature. He placed for its gratification eight cups of *sake*—white wine—from the drinking of which it fell into a drunken stupor, thereby enabling him to cut off all its heads. Then, to make sure of its death, he cut its body into small pieces, but when he reached the tail, he struck something hard—nearly snapping his weapon—which proved to be the most beautiful and wonderful of swords, for it was none other than the one treasured in the Dragon Palace.

Susano-o then married the maiden and presented his trophy to the temple of Ise, where it became known as *Ame no Murakumo no Tsurugi*, “Sword of Black Clouded Heavens.” There it remained until it was given to Yamato Dake, who used it in various exploits, after which it was called *Kusanagi no Tsurugi*. It is now preserved at the temple of Atsuta, where it is regarded as one of the *Sanshū no Shinki*, “Three Sacred Relics.” It is described as having a hilt composed of the *vajra*, the *tama*, nine serpent rings, and a blade decorated with dragons. This sword, however, must not be confused with any one of three others including the *vajra*-hilted sword of Kōbō Daishi, the *Amagoiken*, and the *Amakurikara-ken*, both of which are “Praying for Rain Swords,” and the one dedicated to Fudō, since each of them is frequently found in the glyptic arts as a dragon-entwined sword.

VEILED IS THE SKY AND SOMBRE THE LAND,  
SUDDEN THE CHANGE FROM DAY;  
THE WINDS RISE AND STORM-WAVES ROLL  
PALE GEMS FROM THE GLISTENING FOAM.  
GREAT IS THE SCENE INSPIRING THE SONG  
BUT MELODY RINGS WITH FEAR.  
FROM LUTE AND FLUTE, FAINT HARMONIES FLOAT  
FROM OUT OF THE LOWERING SKY.  
SOUTHWARD THE BROODING MOUNTAINS TOWER  
OVER THE RESTLESS SEAS,  
THEIR GRIM REFLECTIONS TREMBLING  
SINK TO THE BLUE OF THE DEEP.  
'TIS THE BLACK DRAGON BREATHING PEARLS  
LOOMING OUT OF THE DARKNESS.

—TU FU, A.D. 712–770.

## CHAPTER II

# THE DRAGON

(Continued)

*Have you seen the dragon? Approach him cautiously, for no mortal can survive the sight of his entire body. ... He is the spirit of change, therefore of life itself. ... Hidden in the caves of inaccessible mountains or coiled in the unfathomed depths of the sea, he awaits the time when he slowly rouses himself to activity. He unfolds himself in storm clouds; he washes his mane in the blackness of the seething whirlpools. His claws are in the forks of the lightning; his scales begin to glisten in the bark of rainswept pine-trees. His voice is heard in the hurricane which scattering the withered leaves of the forest quickens a new spring.... Coiling again and again in his strength he sheds his crusted skin amid the battle of the elements and for an instant stands revealed by the brilliant shimmer of his scales.*

OKAKUEA.



From a painting by Kakunen

THE dragon—mothered by the serpent of legendary Lemuria of the West; cradled by dawning human intelligence; reared by the romanticism of early races; nurtured by the poetical imagination of succeeding generations; and endowed with the potency of the most powerful creatures of the animal kingdom—eventually in Far Eastern Cathay becomes a real entity, impregnated with a dominant and influential potentiality, the protecting genius of a great nation and the emblem of its ruler.

This sovereign symbol of the Far East should not be regarded as a creature of the animal kingdom, but as an embodiment of the operating force of nature—that force which, as the supreme energy of perpetual change, evolves worlds through processes of generation, growth and dissolution, and compels production and destruction to issue from each other.

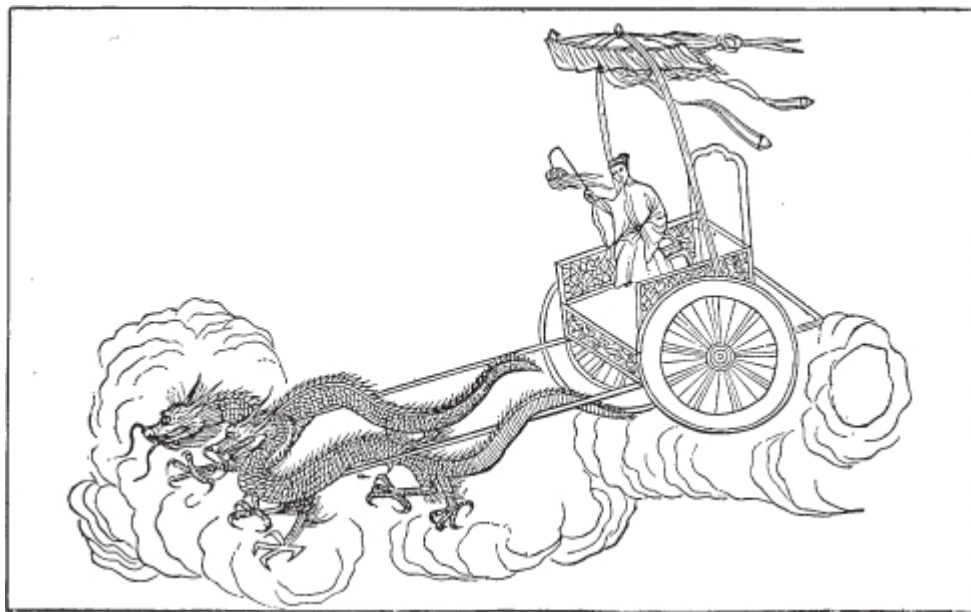
As such the dragon typifies the underlying cause and dominant power, not only of the generation but of the regeneration which permeates all things. As the rain-giver it impregnates and refreshes the earth, bringing happiness and prosperity to humanity. It is therefore, quite the opposite of its occidental counterpart, a genius of benevolence.

But its appearance may be ominous. Like the storm of its creation it may cause havoc and devastation as well as bestow blessings. So we find it an object, not only to be worshipped but propitiated.



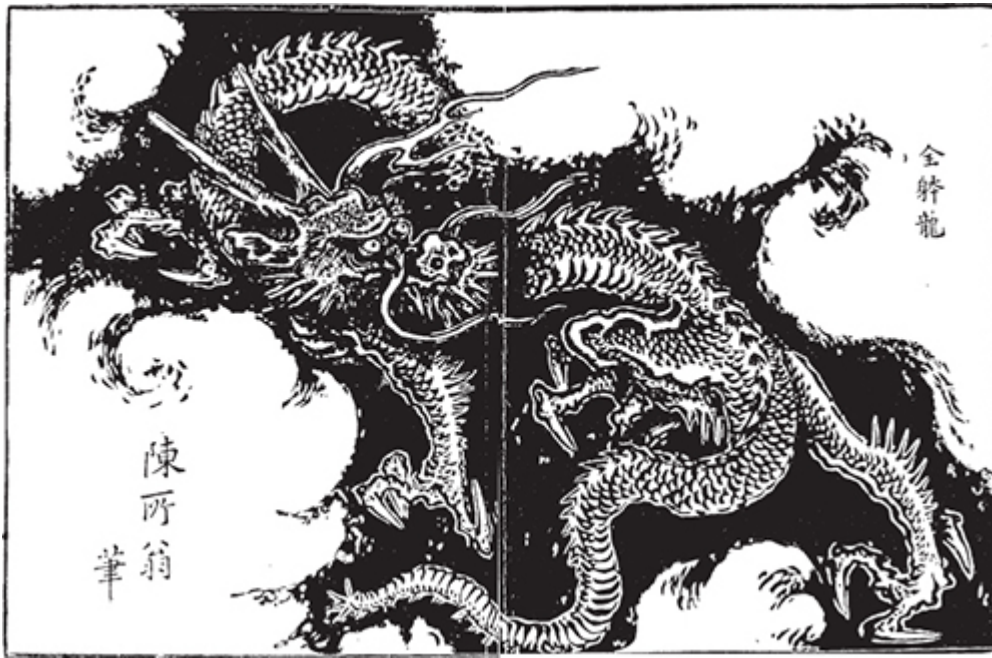
The symbology with which it has become associated is derived from a number of sources. Beginning in the shadowy past as the embodiment of the union of the *Yang* and *Yin*, the masculine and feminine principle of, nature, it has, through the centuries, acquired from prevailing systems of philosophy and religion varied qualities and attributes.

From the earliest times it has been associated with the principle governing the element of water, which, Lao Tzū said, “is the weakest and softest of things, yet overcomes the strongest and hardest.” Coming in contact with Taoism, it became possessed with the knowledge of magic which enabled it to defy all physical law. It therefore not only flies without wings but can also transform itself into innumerable things. Received into Buddhism, it became endowed with spiritual qualities and subordinating itself to the Great Illuminator, Buddha, it assumed the position of a protector of divinities and a guardian of temples. Influenced by the tenets of this faith it acquired a new significance and became the symbol not only of the impermanence and transitoriness of earthly life, but also of the soul of man, which according to the doctrine is in a perpetual state of change and evolution.



From a woodcut of the SHAIST-KAI CHING. The Emperor Ch'i





From a painting by Ch'ên So Wêng

Concerning its origin there are many traditions. Some claim it to be purely an imaginary creature evolved from the activities of the storm. In both the tortuous swirl of the waterspout and the forks of lightning flashing through mountainous caves, the unsophisticated found conclusive proof of its actual existence. Again others claim that it was a real creature which—according to palæontology—as much even as a million years ago coexisted with man; a monster of immense size which, crawling or possibly flying from its lair in the deep sea or a subterranean cavern, devastated, vast regions in search of prey and terrorized humanity. Such a foe, too formidable for warfare, had to be propitiated by gifts of cattle or even of human beings as related in such legends as the *Yawata no Orochi*, “Eight-headed Serpent,” given in the preceding chapter, for which a maiden was sacrificed. But while the dragon myth may have begun with fact, it culminated in fiction. The traditional narrative may originally have been a truthful record of the struggles of prehistoric man with a monster, but in its repetition through the centuries—subject to the play of human imagination—it became so modified that it barely resembles the original. That it was considered a real creature is borne out by the fact that it is one of the twelve animals comprising the signs of the zodiac, all of which have actual existence. That it differed in nature and significance from the serpent is proven by both having been given a separate place in the astrological zone.



From a painting by Ch'ên Yung-chi

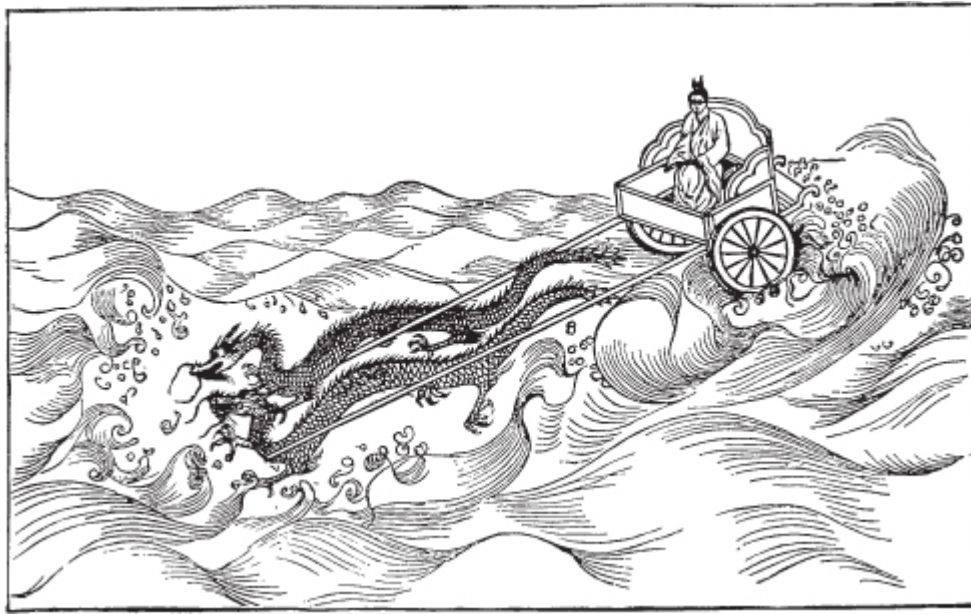




From woodcuts of the T'U SHU CHI CH'ENG

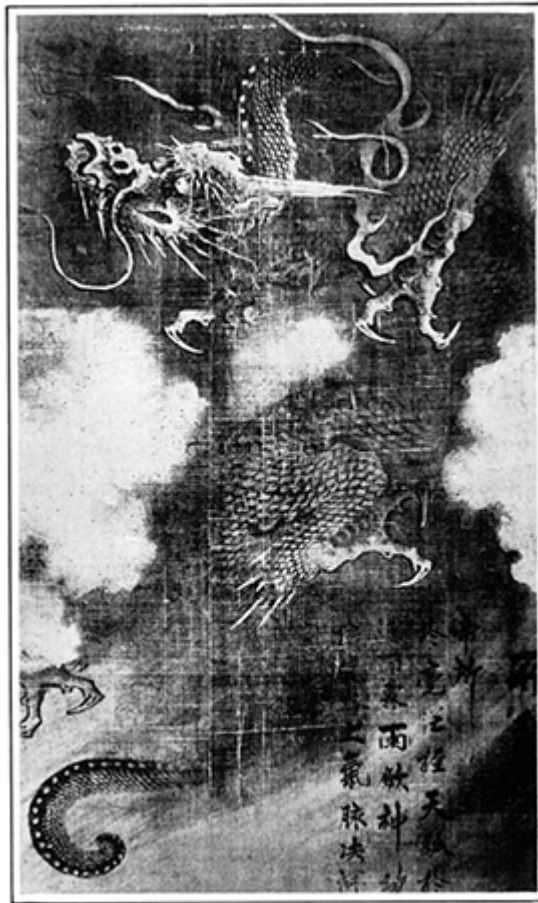
Concerning the genesis of the dragon there are many legends. One of particular interest is derived from Japanese sources although it undoubtedly originated in China. This relates that the dragon is born of the *ryū no tama*, an egg the size of an ostrich-egg, in which its foetus, a small snake, is encased in a heavy shell of stone. For a thousand years this egg had to lie dormant at the bottom of the sea, then, having concluded its life in the waters, it rose and floating to the shore was picked up by someone who was attracted by its beautiful colours. On land it had to remain another thousand years before its hatching could take place. Then, when the hour of its birth arrived, the stone split and the small snake crept forth. But simultaneously with its appearance, as if by magic, it increased in size and generated a storm. Then woe to those who dwelt under the roof which housed it. Before they could make their escape they were enveloped by a hurricane, during which the dragon, belching forth terrific winds and foreboding clouds, grew larger and larger until it forced out the walls, wrecked everything on the premises in order to free itself and make its heavenly ascent. The little snake had become the four-legged celestial dragon.





From a woodcut of the SHAN-KAI CHING. P'ing I, a River God

A narrative—giving its growth from a water snake—contained in an ancient Chinese book states that after the little creature had reached the age of five hundred years, it changed into a *chiao*, a “dragon in embryo.” Then an additional thousand years were required to reach its full growth, when it is called a *lung*. To grow its horns, called *chih mu*—which must be one foot in length before it is able to hear, and without which it is unable to fly—another five hundred years were required to enable it to become a *chiao lung*, “horned dragon.” Again, still another thousand years had to be added to its life in the waters before it attained the dignity and full power of the *ying lung*, “flying dragon.”



From a painting by Mu Ch'i

That dragons are believed to have been evolved from still other sources is shown by a narrative given in the *BOOK OF CHANGES*. Here it is recorded that in the time of Fu-Hsi, the legendary founder of China, an ordinary mortal—through the practice of austerity—was rewarded by being transformed into a dragon of supreme power. He began his hermit life under the sea, where he spent a thousand years. Then rising to the land he passed another period of the same length in similar devotion and became a dragon of the skies.

Of the three kinds of dragons—the legends of which manifestly prove the creature's spiritual evolution—the water dragon was regarded as the symbol of a scholar; the land dragon, the symbol of the statesman; but the dragon of the skies was exclusively the insignia of the Emperor, the Son of Heaven.

The Japanese have a tradition derived from the *NIHONGI* relating that Izanagi, their revered creator, when his wife, Izanami, died at the birth of the fire god, Kagustuchi, in anger cut the child into three pieces, each of which became a dragon.

An old Chinese book describing practices of divination gives a legend in which dragons are described as river gods who cause high floods by their fighting. And should anyone be so unfortunate as to see these battles or even to behold the dead body of a worsted combatant, it would forebode for him ruin and disaster.



From a screen-painting by Ōkyo. The Tumult of the Dragon Combat

As the chief function of the dragon was the production of rain—which the ancients believed to be caused by its carrying water from the earth to the skies—when a drought occurred, it was appealed to by prayers and propitiated in various ways. But if these intercessions were disregarded, then, by invoking the power of magic, it was compelled to act. Not only were incantations resorted to, but also all kinds of things distasteful to it, such as poisonous plants, the bones of tigers, and their clay images, were thrown into its pools and streams. It was also annoyed in other ways, such as clanking copper vessels—particularly those engraved with its image—in front of its den, to irritate it with disturbing noises.

But after the advent of Buddhism a different method was resorted to. Then the priests would read the DAI UN-SHŌ KYŌ—the Scriptures which control the clouds and the rain—whereby they would summon a company of one hundred and eighty-six dragons to aid suffering humanity.





From a Buddhist scripture case. The Dragon Sword of Fudō

Of dragons there were many kinds. They are generally classified according to their functions, colour, size, and parts. According to one authority: "The Celestial Dragon guards the mansions of the gods and supports them so they do not fall. The Spiritual Dragon causes the winds to blow and produces rain for the benefit of mankind. The Earth Dragon marks the courses of streams and rivers. The Dragon of Hidden Treasures watches over the wealth concealed from mortals."

In Buddhism it plays an important part either as a force auxiliary to law or as a malevolent creature to be converted or quelled. One example of its response to instruction is given in the *DAI UN-SHŌ KYŌ*, where it is stated that when a priest preaches a sermon, dragons to the number of thirty-eight thousand assemble to listen to him. Its usual character, however, is such that it is regarded as the guardian of the faith under the direction of the *Bodhisattva* and the *arhats*.



From a wood cut by Sensai

A very beautiful dragon legend told in Japan is associated with Sâkya-muni. It relates that the Holy One, while walking on the mountains at eventide and looking into the depths below, saw the Great Dragon who knew the meaning of all things. Thereupon the Holy One asked him many questions, which were satisfactorily answered. Then the Holy One in great expectation propounded the one of Life and Death which he most wished to know. The Dragon replied that, before revealing the last great truth, he must have his endless hunger fed. To this the Holy One answered, "I will bestow my own body for this purpose." The Dragon then uttered the sacred mystery, and the Holy One, true to his promise, hurled himself into the abyss toward the monster. Just as the great jaws were about to engulf him, the Dragon miraculously became transformed into a lotus blossom, which received him and bore him up to his former place on the mountain, where he continued his profound meditation for the alleviation of suffering humanity.



In studying the many representations, both in sculpture and painting, of the seated Buddha, the above legend is recalled to account for the ever-present lotus throne.

Some dragons derived their names from their colours, which include red, violet, blue, green, yellow, white and black. The rain dragon was said to be black, while the dragons of the mountains, caves and marshes were amber in colour. To the white dragon was attributed the production of gold, through its breath being blown upon the soil of the earth; to the violet one, the creation of crystal balls which were naught but the drooling of the creature.

Among all, the yellow dragon was the most honoured because it is said that yellow was the colour of the mythical creature which rose from the River Lo. This sometimes was described as a dragon, again as a tortoise, but generally was represented as a dragon-horse, of which an illustration was given in the preceding chapter. Hence the yellow dragon was peculiarly symbolical of all that pertains not only to the Emperor, the Son of Heaven, but also to the Imperial household, and was used for the decoration of its entire appanage. So intimate was the association that the Emperor was regarded as the personification of the dragon. His countenance was spoken of as the *lung yen*, "dragon-face," and his throne as the *lung kuei*, "dragon's seat." His anger was known as *pi lin*, "the reversal of the dragon-scales," and any reproof given to his majesty was designated as *pu kun*, "mending the dragon's robes."



From a coloured woodcut by Yoshitsuye

This creature of might and mystery is also the attribute of a number of deities and sages who use it as an attendant, or as a steed. Those who are shown riding it through space, generally heavenward, as in the reproduction of the works of Chao-yüan and Kunisada of the given illustrations; or driving it, harnessed to a royal cart, over clouds or sea as portrayed by the woodcuts taken from the SHAN-KAI CHING, "The Book of Wonders of Land and Sea," reputed to have been written four thousand years ago, include the following: Benzai-ten, the *Brāhmanic* Sarasvatī, the *devi* of learning and eloquence and goddess of love; Kuan-yin (Jap. Kwannon), the goddess of mercy; Li Po (Jap. Rihaku), a sage; and Tai Chên Wang Eujên (Jap. Seiōbo no Shiji or Taishinno Fujin), the sister and attendant of the Royal Queen, Hsi Wang Mu.

Other sages shown with the dragon are: Mao Mêng (Jap. Bōmō), who stands on the head of the animal; Ch'ên Nan (Jap. Chinnan), who sometimes appears as one of the Eight *Sennin*, a mendicant represented invoking a dragon from a bowl of water; Mao Shê-huang (Jap. Bashikō), who performs acupuncture on a sick dragon's back; and Pan-tho-chia (Jap. Handaka Sonja), who sits on a rock beside a crouching dragon.



From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. The Dragon Breathing Clouds

Several Emperors, likewise, used the aerial monster as a means of transportation: Huang Ti, who is shown riding one; Yü, whose carriage was drawn by two; and Ming-Huang, whose boat was borne upon the back of one while he was fleeing from an enemy. Upon one occasion, however, when the last-named Emperor was crossing the Yangtse-kiang River, two malicious dragons tried to get under his boat to upset it. Undisturbed, he merely exhorted them, saying: "I received my appointment from heaven and I do my utmost to benefit mankind. To be born is the course of nature, to die is heaven's

decree. Why be troubled by dragons?" Hearing these words the unruly creatures, startled and alarmed, fled from the scene.



From a woodcut by Keisai Masayoshi

The two most important associates of the dragon are the tiger and phoenix, but the exposition of these relationships will be reserved for the chapters devoted to these two animals.

In poetry the dragon is almost unknown. The emotion it kindles, born of fear, begets a reverence mingled with unrest, rather than the gratification consequent to the contemplation of beauty, which is the real source of poetic inspiration.

In the Orient the fields of the arts are closely defined. They are not permitted to usurp each other's functions. Hence the great mythical drama, where from the heavens the mighty dragon—cloud-sheathed and awesome of mien, breathing fire and vapour into the tumult of the storm—found its chief expression in the graphic and glyptic arts. The picturesque characteristics of its long, undulating body interwoven with whirls of spiral clouds, alternately revealed and concealed, has given to the oriental worker—ever conscious of the beauty of line and the value of contrasting masses—the exceptional opportunity to create wonderful designs. For two reasons—one the expression of its significance which brought spiritual merit to the artist, and the other the desire to portray its beauty—the dragon has become almost omnipresent in the land of its inception. For there is no art and rarely an industry where it is not used as a decorative motive.

This is well exemplified in an account of the birth of the dragon, taken from an ancient Japanese record. Beginning with the statement that nine dragons are hatched simultaneously, it proceeds as follows:



From a coloured woodcut by Kunisada. The Dragon King Carrying Shaka and Two Attendants Through a Storm

“The first young dragon sings, and likes all harmonious sounds; hence the tops of Japanese bells are cast in its form. The second delights in the sound of musical instruments; hence the *koto*, ‘horizontal harp,’ and the *tsuzumi*, ‘a girl’s drum,’ struck with the fingers, are ornamented with its figure. The third is fond of drinking; therefore goblets and drinking-cups are adorned with its representations. The fourth likes steep and dangerous places; hence gables, towers and projecting beams of temples and pagodas have its images carved upon them. The fifth is a great destroyer of living things, fond of killing and bloodshed; therefore swords are decorated with its golden images. The sixth loves learning and delights in literature; hence the covers and title-pages of books and literary works are decorated with its likeness. The seventh is renowned for its power of hearing the gentle sounds of the tree leaves. And since all healing is associated with leaves and the medicine made therefrom is kept in bottles and similar containers, it is depicted on these objects. The eighth enjoys sitting; hence easy-chairs are carved in its image. The ninth loves to bear weight; therefore the feet of tables and *hibachi* are shaped like its feet.”



From a woodcut by Keisai Masayoshi

As a theme for painters it has ever been popular. Its picturesque characteristics, enhanced by its mysterious qualities, have made it a most interesting subject. However ferocious its aspect, it is always attractive and never loathsome and repellent like the snake to which it is so frequently compared.

Its first representation, according to ancient records, occurs as early as the reign of Huang Ti, the Yellow Emperor (2693 B.C.); but Chu-ko Liang (A.D. 181–34) is reputed to be its first painter. It was, however, Ts'ao Pu-hsing, also of the third century A.D., who immortalized himself by painting it in so real and lifelike a manner that, even after two centuries had elapsed, during a prolonged drought it averted an impending famine by causing clouds to gather and a heavy rain to fall, when held over a body of water. This artist was said to have derived his knowledge of the Thunder Lord from a red dragon which he saw swimming in a lake, and which furnished the pattern for the delineation of dragons for all succeeding generations of painters. He also was the first to depict it on the walls of Buddhist temples, setting a fashion which has ever since prevailed.





From a painting by Chao-yüan. A Ride to the Kw'en Lun Mountains

In the fourth century, tradition relates that Ku K'ai-chih, a great sage of art, habitually painted dragons without eyes and, when questioned concerning their absence he proudly replied: "My dragons live and if I give them eyes they will fly away." Since that remote time the eyes of the dragon are its last features to be delineated, for should the dragon be so realistic as to leave the painting, it might cause untold disaster. Such an experience had Chang Sêng-yu of the sixth century. So great was his painting, so imbued with life his dragon, that no sooner had its eyes been completed than it gathered black clouds from which issued thunder and lightning, and, to the astonishment of the artist, left the painting and, forcing its way through the walls of the house and wrecking the building, disappeared into the heavens.



From a coloured woodcut by Bunsen. The Dragon of the Waters Struggling to Regain His Pearl of Omnipotence

Another artist, Chang Sang-yin of the sixth century, painted so wondrous a dragon that as soon as it was completed, by painting in the eyes, a black cloud arose from the paper and, filling the chamber, sent forth peals of thunder, during which it burst through the walls and vanished into the sky.

Again of Wu Tao-tzū of the eighth century—one of China's greatest geniuses, who was said to be the reincarnation of Chang Sêng-yu—a similar tale is told. His remarkable dragon, when viewed by sympathetic observers, actually moved about the canvas, and upon the occasion of a storm would envelop itself in black clouds. The accompanying illustrations by Ch'ên Yung-chi and Mu Ch'i remain unexcelled in the organism of their compositions, the restraint of their patterns and the mastery of their technique. These two illustrations offer notable examples of the claim that no one can look upon the entire dragon and live; hence it is depicted in parts, the remainder of its body being hidden by clouds.

Again, the dragon is dramatically portrayed in beautiful line compositions in the reproductions taken from the T'U SHU CHI CH'ÊNG, the "Imperial Encyclopædia" compiled by the Emperor K'ang Hsi of the Ch'ing dynasty (A.D. 1662–1723).

The Japanese dragon differs only in minor details from its Chinese prototype notwithstanding that it reflects the particular characteristics and temperament of the nation. Its only distinguishing structural deviation lies in its claws, which are three in number, while the Chinese dragon has four, except for Imperial usage, when there are five. It was brought from China by Buddhist priests during

the Sung and Yüan dynasties (A.D. 960–1368); its earliest representation by a Japanese artist being that by Chō Densu (the latter part of the fourteenth century), who, following the example of Ts'ao Puhsing, also used it for ceiling decorations of temples. Since that remote time it has been done by successive generations and schools from the academic Kanō of the aristocracy to the less tutored Ukiyo-ye of the lower classes.

In the screen paintings by Ōkyo, the founder of the Maruyama school of the eighteenth century, is shown a typical example of the portrayal of the dragon by a great artist, while in the works of Kuniyoshi, Yoshitsuye, Keisai, and Sensai, who were designers for wood-block printing and not painters, may be seen its less pretentious representations in the field of art. The delineations of Keisai and of Sensai furnish interesting patterns of line, the former being distinguished for its impressionistic brevity and the latter for its adaptation to a circular enclosure.

For half a century Japan has not regarded this dragon symbol seriously, and China, since the establishment of the Republic, has assumed the same attitude. "The Dragon is dead!" they loudly and proudly acclaim; and the Imperial standard of old, golden and gorgeous, which gracefully floated against the azure skies, glorifying the cities on holiday occasions—is gone. The dragon flag, which for centuries thrilled multitudes with æsthetic and poetic emotions, stirring them with national pride and loyalty, has been displaced by a twentieth-century device devoid of the first element of beauty.

After all the dragon is not dead. It lies slumbering in the heart of every oriental and lives in every art of the past. Its use has been so general that little exists of Chinese handiwork that does not display it in some form. That it has not wholly passed is gratifying to occidental students, who all the more relish the arts of the Orient because of the paucity of symbolism in their own traditions. That the dragon may become re-enthroned—not to blazon ancient and mediæval superstition, but to stimulate the poetic imagination and revive the love of the beautiful—is the hope of modern designers.

THE BRIGHT MOON PEARL IS CONCEALED IN THE  
OYSTER; THE DRAGON IS THERE.

—SHI KING.

THE SUMMER WINDS ARISE,  
THE DRAGON MOUNTS THE SKIES.

—YIH KING

## CHAPTER III

# THE TIGER

*When this king of beasts growls all animals flee to cover; but when his mighty roar breaks the mountain solitude, the winds rage until all nature trembles.*



From a painting by Kakunen

THE tiger in oriental lore occupies a position second only to that of the dragon with which from time immemorial it has been associated. Its first appearance representing deity is found in an ancient work describing ritual tools and implements of the Chou and Han dynasties (1122 B.C.–220 A.D.). Prior to this, geometric forms were used to symbolize objects of worship such as heaven and earth, the sun, moon, and stars.

In the I CHING, “Book of Changes,” the most ancient of all records, however, it takes on a definite entity, figuring in astronomical and astrological tradition. Here it appears in a map of the heavens known as the *Ssü Fang*—as given in [Chapter I](#)—which delineates the mythical animals having dominion not only over the Four Directions of the Universe but also over the Four Seasons of the Year.

In this ancient annal it is stated that Winter and the North are represented by the *Kuei Shê*, “Black Tortoise”; Spring and the East, by the *Ch’ing Lung*, “Blue Dragon”; Summer and the South, by the *Chu Ch’ieh*, “Vermilion Bird”; and Autumn and the West, by the *Pai Hu*, “White Tiger.”

The tiger was combined with autumn not only because its ferocity was said to resemble the fierceness of this season in China, but because at this time the animal was known to do its most deadly work. For then it seeks a mate, roaming abroad invading human settlements and terrifying the people.

At an equally early period the tiger is found among the twelve cyclical animals which are said to inhabit the Yellow Road of the Sun, or the sun’s orbit, the Chinese names for which are: *Tzŭ*, “Rat”; *Chou*, “Ox”; *Yin*, “Tiger”; *Mao*, “Hare”; *Chên*, “Dragon”; *Szŭ*, “Snake”; *Wu*, “Horse”; *Wei*, “Goat”; *Shên*, “Monkey”; *Yu*, “Cock”; *Hsü*, “Dog”; and *Hai*, “Boar.” These are zodiacal names and not those of the animals represented.

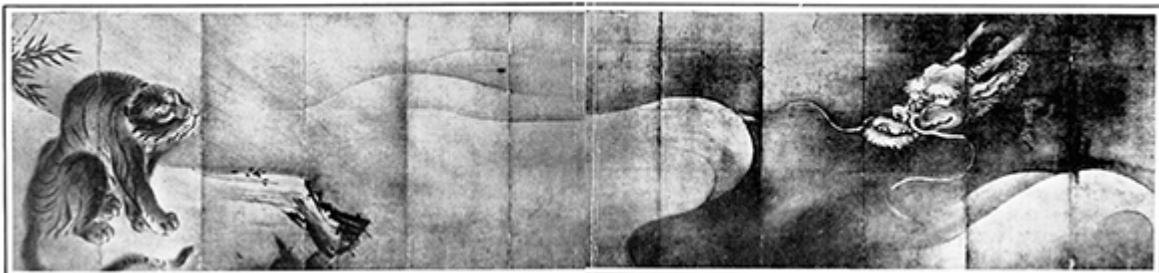
This duodenary cycle has been denominated the Zodiac of Hunters and Shepherds. It doubtless had its inception in the dim past when there existed a much closer intimacy and sympathy between man and all animals, and when also the nomadic life of the people kept them in the open, giving them

ample opportunity to contemplate the grandeur and magnificence of the starry vault. It was unquestionably derived from the two early religions, Star and Animal Worship, which were but branches of the Animism or Universism common to all primitive peoples. It is stated in an ancient commentary that the White Tiger is a metamorphosis of a luminary in the west called variously by the names *T'ai Po Hsing*, *T'ai Po*, or *T'ai Pai* signifying "Star of Great Whiteness," as which the spirit of this star first became known. It is said that it lives in the Silver Stream of Heaven, "The Milky Way," just as the Three-legged Red Crow dwells in the sun, and the White Hare in the moon.



From a painting by Ōkyo

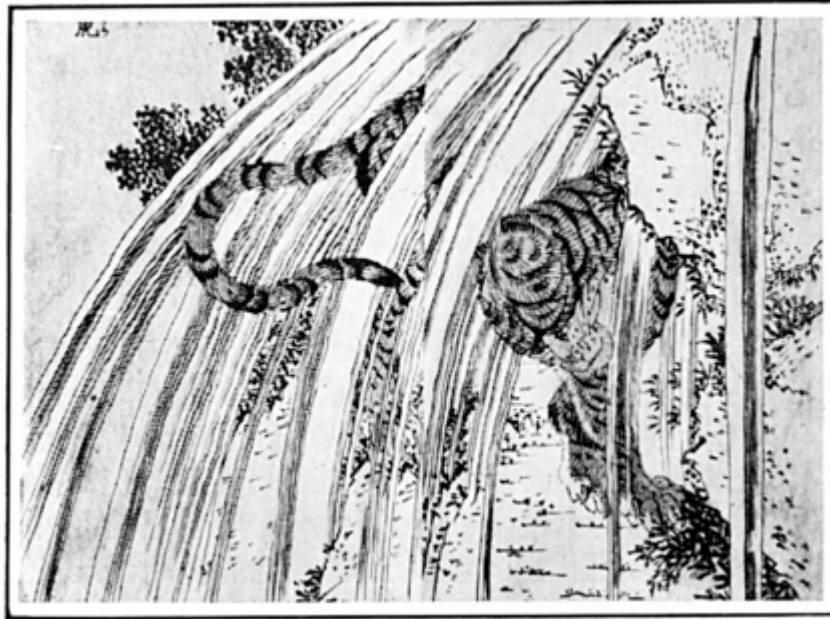
The common tiger, known as *hu*, becomes the *Pai Hu*, "White Tiger," after it has lived five hundred years. But to attain its full longevity it must be a thousand years old. Then it is classed with the Immortals and can transform itself into any shape. It is known by the title of *Pai chon chih ch'ang*, "Chief of all quadrupeds," not only because it is superior to and can conquer all animals, but because the character *wang*, "king," is figured in the fur on its brow.



From screen-paintings by Tohaku. The Tiger Glares at the Sky, Where the Dragon is Partly Seen Amid Dark Clouds

According to the YÜ YANG TSA TSU, an ancient book, it can see in the darkness by the light which issues from its own eyes; and it possesses an attribute—similar in character to the *chu*, “pearl,” of the dragon—called a *wei*, from which it derives its powers. This bodily organ which is half flesh and half bone, about one inch in length, is located along its ribs and has the shape of a *yi*, a Chinese ideograph. Even when taken from the animal it retains its magic power; hence it is prized, for, if carried by a human being, it will cause him to be feared by both men and beasts.

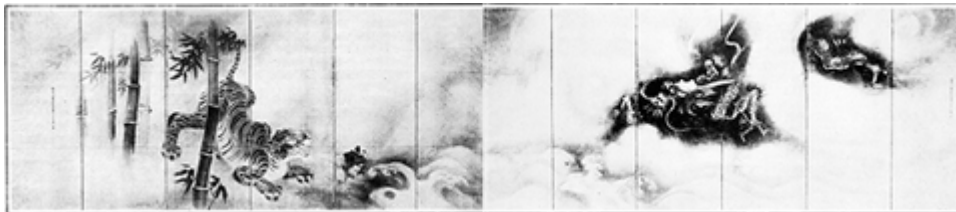
The tiger belongs to the nether world, being associated with spectres and demons over which it exercises supreme power. For this reason as well as its being the presiding genius of the West and the autumn—all of which are influenced by the *Yin* principle—it manifests the *Yin* influence.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Tiger and the Waterfall

Being the most ferocious of all animals it is not only feared by mankind, but is also used as an instrument for the destruction of the creatures of its own world, since it renders them powerless by absorbing their evil qualities. For these reasons not only the image of the entire body of the creature, but that of any of its separate parts, were used as a fetish in the exercise of many forms of magic.

Tiger charms and amulets were made to ward off every kind of bad luck and every form of calamity, as well as to inspire cowards with “tiger courage.”



From screen-paintings by Tanyū. The Tiger Roars and the Winds Rage; the Dragon Breathes into the Gale and the Clouds Whirl

The earliest record of such talismans appears in the ancient texts of the CHOU LI (1122–249 B.C.) relating that tiger-heads cast in bronze were buried with the dead just as, at a later period, similar

amulets of jade were used. Tiger charms were most common among the military classes, where they were used both on the warriors' personal equipment and on all implements of warfare.

In the SHUO WÊN, a dictionary of the Han dynasty (206 B.C., A.D. 220), there is a reference to "an auspicious jade of tiger design, used to mobilize an army."



From a painting by Ōkyo

Then, again, the image of the tiger was worn as an insignia of rank of officers of the fourth class, and that of a tiger-cat by those of the sixth class. All gifts also, presented to the military, particularly of jade ornaments to be worn on the body, were either shaped like the tiger or decorated with its image.





From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Tiger and the Wind

Sticks presented by the Emperor to an ambassador sent to a foreign country were capped with a tiger-head and called *hu chieh*, “tiger stick”; and chairs of professors, soldiers, and heroes were generally covered with tiger-skins called *kao-pi*, implying that—like the tiger which after death leaves a beautiful skin—they should bequeath a great name to posterity.

The image of the tiger was extensively used as a door-charm to ward off the entry of all demons. It was painted on paper or thin boards and sometimes carved from peach-wood. In this form it was placed on the screens at the entrance of a magistrate’s hall to strike terror to the hearts of all culprits. It is seen over the lintels of dwellings, and temples where sacrifices are celebrated, to frighten away all demoniacal influences. It also appears in the same form at the entrance of gambling dens, while, within the resorts, its statue is worshipped with the hope of inviting good winnings. As a god, it is represented standing erect and holding a cash in its mouth or forepaws, for which reason it is called “His excellency the cash-grasping tiger.” The proprietors of such places keep incense and candles burning before this tiger-god, to whom they make offerings of food on the second and sixteenth day of each month.

That the “tiger spirit,” by which the creature was believed to terrorize all life, was coveted by human kind, and by warriors in particular, is proved by the practice of officers dosing themselves with a concoction of pulverized tiger bones and teeth, mixed with the gall of the creature. Should the whiskers of the beast, however, by chance get into this potion or be put into food, the consequence will be ominous, for these bristles were regarded as the most fatal of poisons.



From a woodcut by Shuzan

Again, parts of the animal were worn as talismans against fright, sickness, and fire, while fever patients were told tiger stories to stimulate courage to fight the spectres which were afflicting them. All forms of delirium and insanity were diagnosed as “tiger obsession,” the complaint being known as “The transformation into a tiger.”



From a screen painting attributed to Tanyü

But in *Fêng-shui* the tiger exerts its widest influence. *Fêng-shui*, which means Wind and Water, is a rudimentary system of natural science belonging to Taoism. In the I CHING, the *Tao* is defined as “The Way or Road in Which the Universe Moves,” and the *I* as “The Changes and Mutations,” or the processes of birth and rebirth which constitute the production of life. The universe is described as a living organism which breathes forth the *Tao*, consisting of two great energizing and regulating powers called the *Yang* and *Yin*, the operations of which it is the function of *Fêng-shui* to learn in order that their most beneficent influences may be utilized for the welfare of mankind.



From a woodcut by Hokusai

The chief practice of *Fêng-shui* is in connection with another branch of Chinese religious life, Ancestor Worship, where it is employed to locate the sites of graves so that the most favourable atmospheric conditions may prevail. For the graves, particularly of parents, are objects of great solicitude. Inasmuch as they are one of the dwelling-places of the soul, they become the means by which the dead protect the living from the malevolent influences of spectres. Hence, should the dead not be placed where the *Tao*, “World Order,” may exercise its fullest power, they would become angry and resentful, withdraw their tutelage, and leave the living at the mercy of the hordes of the demon world.

Demonology is a conspicuous factor of Taoism. One of its fundamentals of doctrine claims that all things in the heavens above and the earth below, inanimate and animate, including mountains, hills, plains, rivers, even localities, are vitalized by the dual principle of *Tao*. Each thing has a soul which may be either a *shên*, “good spirit,” or a *kuei*, “evil spirit,” and is accordingly controlled by either the beneficent heavenly *Yang* or the malefic earthly *Yin*.



From a coloured wood-cut by Kuniyoshi

The *shên* and *kuei* influences are classified under the four distinct heads of the animals of the *Ssŭ Fang*, the uranoscope given in [Chapter I](#). These represent respectively the northern, eastern, southern, and western sides of any site or any structure placed upon it; for *Fêng-shui* is employed to locate sites for all kinds of structures, including dwellings and temples as well as graves.



From a woodcut by shuzan



Of these animal influences, those of the Tiger and Dragon, representing Wind and Water, are the most important. Should these two opposing forces not combine to produce the most auspicious atmospheric conditions in the chosen localities, making them cold and dry or warm and wet in their proper seasons, the spirits will not permit plants to flourish nor food to be produced anywhere for the sustenance of mankind.

The heavenly influences of Water are represented by seas, rivers, brooks and lakes; and the earthly influences of Wind by mountains, plains, rocks, trees and buildings—in fact, by any object that rises above the level of the earth's surface. Therefore, the action and interaction of these two opposing forces in their manifold degrees require the most serious consideration.

*Taoshi*, "Taoist doctors," schooled in all the knowledge of the science and skilled in the practice of its art, study the mutations of the elements caused by watercourses and wind currents in order not only to select the most favourable situation for a grave, or for a structure, but also to place it in a position that is in harmony with the Four Directions. Computations are made by means of various tools and implements of divination, including the magic calendar with its sacred characters and devices, and the geomancer's compass. The Green Dragon, the *Yang* force, with its lucky significance, is then placed on the right, and the White Tiger, the *Yin* force, with its unlucky significance, is placed on the left so that the most propitious project of Wind and Water may be secured. Should the power of the Tiger be stronger than that of the Dragon, and the Wind be more dominant than the Water, the beneficial grave influences would be cut off from the living, leaving them to disaster and death.



From a woodcut by Sadatoshi

In the conceptions of the tiger of a later period, it appears in an entirely different light from that by which it was seen by the Taoists; for after the advent of Buddhism it seems to have undergone a marvellous change, since it no longer is regarded as the representative of the forces of darkness, but a virile and potential exemplification of *Yang*. Actually purged of the vicious and rapacious nature by which it was formerly known, the nobility of its massive form, the beauty of its colour and proportion, the grace of its lithe movements, the supremacy of its strength, and its undaunted courage, have made it a fitting symbol of the power, grandeur, and glory of the Buddhist faith.

It therefore has attained immortality and an exalted position, in which it is deified and revered. For this reason it has become a prevalent symbol and a favourite theme in art, being variously combined with the Bamboo, the Waterfall, and the Dragon. It is also shown as the attribute of such holy beings as *lohan* and *sennin*, including Po-tho-lo (Jap. Hattara Sonja), who sits on a rock with a tiger

crouching at his feet; Fêng Kan (Jap. Hoken Zenji), who rides a tiger; Ku Ling-jên (Jap. Koreijin), whose constant companion is a tiger; and Ts'ai Lan (Jap. Shinretsu) with Wên Hsiao (Jap. Bunsho), a man and woman who together ride a pair of tigers.



From a coloured woodcut by Koryūsai. The Wise Mother

It is also associated with several heroes who have become celebrated for the courage they displayed in killing it. Among these are Kato Kiyomasa, Hadesu, and Bushō, one of the Suikoden group who slew a tiger with a single blow of his right arm, as shown in a given illustration. To acquire *tora no yo tsuyoi*, “tiger courage,” was the goal not only of every warrior but of every youth; hence these heroes have become examples for emulation. Boys must be brave, but with girls it is quite different, for—according to a Japanese friend—“Bravery is not good for girls; if they are too brave, they are troublesome.” Possibly the twentieth-century reforms may change conditions in the Orient as they have in the Occident and the Japanese woman may yet be given the opportunity to display tiger courage as did the women of China during the recent revolutions of the Yellow Kingdom.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. Bushō Slaying the Tiger



From the LI SHUI TS'UAN CHÜAN. Shu Yü and His Tigers

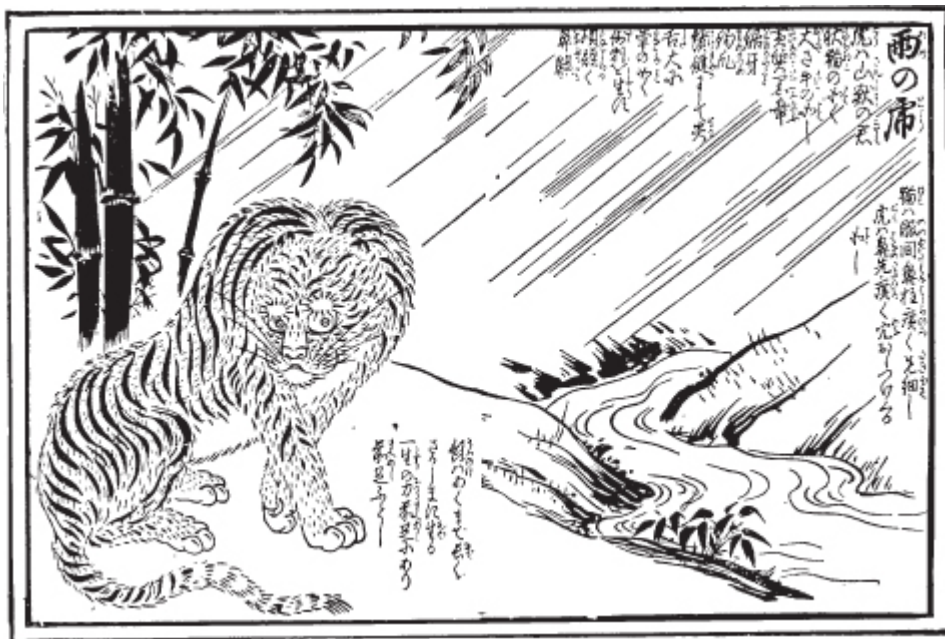
The combination of bamboo with the tiger is probably due to the nature of the mammoth grass which offers a harbour to the beast. Since the bamboo never resists the wind, and the wind ever accompanies the tiger, the combination is regarded as a symbol of the hospitality of the weak for the strong, although it is maintained that the bamboo grove is a thicket which no other animal can penetrate. This grove, again, when storm-tossed with rain as well as wind, has been made to typify a



jungle of wild and poisonous vegetation—a symbol of sin—through which the tiger—a symbol of the human spirit—forces its way.

The tiger is also related to the waterfall, which is designated “The Tiger of Waters,” on account of their similarity of characteristics which, in both cases, are forceful and furious.

The dragon is, however, the chief associate of the tiger. In this affiliation the latter retains the significance of its early symbolism; for it is asserted that whenever these two meet, they fight. The tiger, which represents the material or *Yin* forces, roars at the dragon, which represents the spiritual or *Yang* forces, causing a tumult in which the dragon is said to prevail. The portrayal of this subject is regarded as the contest of wind and water, wherein the wind, which follows the tiger, blows vigorously into the clouds, which follow the dragon. According to the I CHING, “the breath of the tiger creates the wind and the breath of the dragon creates the clouds; together they create the rain which fructifies the earth and brings forth food for mankind.” Therefore, in times of drought, it was customary to drop the bones of the tiger into the wells of the dragon, which so enraged him that he caused a storm resulting in a rainfall.



From a woodcut by Morikuni. The Tiger and the Storm

The earliest representation of tiger subjects is found in the Chinese and Japanese *Butsu-ye*, Buddhist pictures of the *Zen* sect, about the eighth century. At this time, paintings in monochrome done in India ink came into vogue and have ever since been popular.

In Japan the real tiger never existed. All that was known of the creature was traditional. It was as mythical as the dragon, both being introduced from China about the same time. For this reason the Japanese delineations should never be regarded as scientific representations of a zoological reality, but as an expression of the conception of the life and spirit of a creature symbolizing a lofty spiritual idea. Hence, when a western painter visiting a Japanese artist criticized the drawing of a tiger, claiming it was not anatomically true to life, the Japanese artist replied, “Yes, possibly, but it is morally perfect.” He meant to say that he had portrayed the tiger, not its body. When the paintings of the tiger are viewed in this light they will no longer appear singular and grotesque but become interesting examples of powerful expression, through the medium of the conventions of a great art which must be understood to be appreciated.



From a coloured wood-cut by Oshū. Defying the Dragon

Doubtless all the great artists of China left paintings of the tiger, but very few of these are within the reach of the western student. Such, however, is not the case of similar paintings in Japan, for they have ever been so popular that rarely can a public or private art collection be found, nor any exhibition of the present time, without its quota of representations of the tiger.



From the LI SHUI TS'UAN CHÜAN. Wu Ts'ai Lan and Wên Hsiao

Among the painters, Ganku (1749–1838) is the most celebrated. He is said not only to have patterned his tiger after the works of the famous Chinese painter, Chao Tao-lin, but he also had the exceptional opportunity of studying the creature from life; for his lord, the wealthy count Mayedo, for amusement, kept on his estate tigers which he had imported from Korea, the native habitat of the beast.

Another and more celebrated artist, Kanō Eitoku (1545–1592), used the tiger as a motive for the decorations of the cedar doors of the Nishi Hongwanji temple in Kyōto, which have been an inspiration to artists for several generations.

“The Tiger and Dragon” subjects were especially favoured as a theme of the Kanō school which flourished during the seventeenth century. At this time they were used to decorate palaces and temples, many of which are still in a good state of preservation and may be seen by tourists.

Two of the accompanying illustrations, showing reproductions of screen paintings by Kanō Tanyū, and Hasegawa Tōhaku, offer admirable examples of these compositions.



From a woodcut by Morikuni. The Tiger and the Waterfall

The painting of animals in the Orient—quite the reverse from the occidental custom—was never considered a specialty requiring a particular training to the exclusion of all other lines of art instruction, but merely one branch of a system which included the scientific study and artistic representation of everything in the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms. Hence, not only every artist, but every school student drew animals with as much ease and facility as he wrote the characters of their names. Drawing and painting, during the old regime, were as much an educational necessity as reading and writing; and the training was not camouflaged by the substitution of art stunts for the purpose of making a showing, but was given serious and thorough consideration. At that time, art ideals were high and great achievements recognized and rewarded. Animal painting, therefore, ranking artistically with figure and landscape painting, is to be found among the greatest products of the most celebrated artists of the Orient.

Tradition and literature abound with legends of the tiger. So numerous are they that two famous works have been devoted exclusively to tiger tales of ancient times. These pertain not only to *Fêng-shui*, but also to the folklore of the Chinese. One, well known, entitled “The Wise Mother”—shown in an accompanying illustration—is apparently designed to prove the sagacity of the animal. It relates that this female tiger had three cubs, one of which was vicious and could not, with safety, be left with either of the other two. The mother was obliged to take them across a river, but could carry but one at a time. She therefore devised a plan by which she made seven different journeys across the water, carrying the ill-tempered one back and forth while she left the others on the opposite banks.

Two other legends of interest, taken from the *LI SHUI TS’UAN CHÜAN*, an ancient work, are the story of “The Immortal Shu Yu,” and “The Alchemist Wu Ts’ai Lan.” The former relates to a sage who asked a ferryman to carry him across the river. Being poorly clad and having the appearance of a beggar, he was treated with scant courtesy and his request refused. When the ferryman, however, reached the opposite shore, he was amazed to see Shu Yü standing there unconcerned, stroking the heads of two white tigers. This was conclusive proof that he was no ordinary person but a sage of great power. The latter concerns a female sage who had become so expert in the practice of magic that she was visited by scholars from all parts of the Empire. She, after all, proved herself to be a weak mortal, for she met and fell in love with Wên Hsiao—a frailty most unbecoming a genie. The two were married and riding tigers left for foreign parts. She, however, was given cause to reflect, for while on the journey a voice from above reproached her with “Wu Ts’ai Lan, you have fallen from

your high estate. You, who belonged to the hosts of heaven, have sacrificed your celestial wisdom by allying yourself with a mortal.”

IN CHINESE ART THE TIGER IS NOT MERELY A WILD ANIMAL, BUT ONE OF THOSE GREAT TRADITIONAL SYMBOLS THE MEANING OF WHICH IS FLUID RATHER THAN FIXED, ACQUIRING NEW PHASES OF SIGNIFICANCE IN THE FLUCTUATIONS OF A NATION’S MIND, IT IS USUALLY PAINTED AS A PENDANT TO THE DRAGON, AND SEEMS TO STAND FOR THE ELEMENTAL FORCE AND RAGES OF NATURE OPPOSED TO THE INFINITE SOUL; “THE TIGER ROARING HIS INCESSANT CHALLENGE TO THE UNKNOWN TERROR OF THE SPIRIT.”

—LAURENCE BINYON

## CHAPTER IV

# THE PHOENIX

*Wondrous art thou, fêng-huang!  
Glorious in thy colours iridescent,  
Graceful in thy flight majestic;  
Joyful in thy mien serene,  
Mystic in thy virtues illustrious.  
Noblest of all birds,  
Thou art the most honoured of thy kind.*



From a painting by Kakunen

THE phoenix, *fêng-huang*, is another of the *Ssŭ Ling*, “Four Divine Animals,” given in [Chapter I](#). It is also called *yen fêng-chi tsu huang*, “the phoenix bird and his mate,” a name common to both sexes although *fêng* is the particular name for the male and *huang* for the female. But in common parlance the bird is referred to as the *fêng*.

It is a chimerical creature like the dragon, a composite of the parts of other animals and the embodiment of their corresponding potential attributes. Consequently, it is the most honourable and therefore the chief of the three hundred and sixty varieties of the feathery tribe.

It not only combines the beauty, grace, elegance and charm of all birds, but those of the Argus pheasant and the peacock in particular.

It is generally represented as a bird of gorgeous plumage whose height and tail feathers each measure fully six feet. Its parts consist of the head of a pheasant, surmounted by a cock’s comb, which assumes various cloud shapes and at times sends forth long spiral plumets; the beak of a swallow, beneath which flow beardlike feathery tufts; and the neck of a tortoise, at the base of which is a beautiful ruff of silken feathers, from which issue flamelike appendages.

It attains its maturity in the third year of its age, at which time its plumage is of five different colours: greenish-blue, yellow, red, white, and black. These colours symbolize the five cardinal virtues: uprightness, honesty, justice, fidelity, and benevolence, the ideographs of which may be found inscribed on its body. Such is its benevolence that it will never peck nor injure any living thing, nor tread upon any growing plants. It subsists entirely upon the seeds of bamboo and drinks only at sacred springs.



Of this Yuan Chi of the Chin dynasty writes: “There is a wondrous bird called *fêng-huang*. Its body has five colours and its mind is composed of five virtues. It will refuse to eat if the food is not the bamboo seed. It will refuse to perch if the tree is not the *wu-tung* tree. When there is neither bamboo seed nor *wu-tung* tree, it flies and flies and is very sorrowful.”

The Chinese mystics see in it not only world elements, but human attributes. Hence they assign to it the Six Resemblances and the Nine Qualities. Relating to the former they say: “Its head is like heaven; its eyes like the sun; its back like the crescent moon; its wings like the wind; its tail like the trees and plants, and its feet like the earth.” And of the latter: “Its colour delights the eyes; its comb expresses righteousness; its tongue utters sincerity; its voice chants melody; its ears enjoy music; its heart conforms to regulations; its breast contains the treasures of literature, and its spurs are powerful against the transgressor.”



From a coloured woodcut by Hokusai

When it crows it utters ceremonious greetings. For example, in the morning it exclaims: “*Ho hsi*—I congratulate you”; at night, “*Hsin*—Goodness”; when standing, “*Ch’i fei*—I carry assistance”; when walking, “*Kuei shê*—Returning joyously”; when flying, “*Lung Tu chê wo*—Lung Tu knows me,” and “*Huang chê chu szǔ hsi*—Huang has come with the bamboos.”





From a coloured woodcut by Utamaro. Utamaro painting the *Hōō*

When it sings, its voice chants five musical notes corresponding to its five virtues. Those low in the scale are loud and full like the sonorous detonations of a drum, but those high are soft and mellow, like the tenderest cadences of a bell; for according to the SHANG LI T' IEN WEI, "When the world is at peace, the singing of the *fêng* is like the tollings from a temple."

In flying, its notes sound *hwui hwui*, and when it sings on the lofty Mount Kuang, it fills the air with melodies "which cause the *wu-tung* tree to flourish," for this is the only tree upon which this divine bird will deign to perch. Hence the Chinese say, "Without a *wu-tung* tree you cannot expect the *fêng* to visit you"; and again, "As the *wu-tung* tree attracts the *fêng* to your house, so virtue induces happiness."

When walking it strides with a measured tread adored by all its kingdom; and, when on the wing, millions of the feathery hosts swarm about it, following in its wake until the earth becomes darkened as during an eclipse.

At its death, all winged creatures mourn and cease from song while a hundred birds peck the earth and bury it.



From an embroidery for an Imperial wedding

Of the Five Cardinal Relationships—consisting of: the Sovereign and His Subjects; Husband and Wife; Father and Son; Elder Brother and Younger Brother; Friend and Friend, which are represented by the feathery tribe—it symbolizes the first, while the others are represented respectively by mandarin ducks, storks, small grey birds, and yellow birds.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Celestial Musician

The appearance of the *fêng* was most rare and ever considered an auspicious augury. Only during times of peace, when the people were virtuous and conditions were propitious for the advent of a great sage or philosopher, a man of incomparable understanding, penetration, and benevolence, did this bird of favourable omen leave its celestial abode to felicitate mankind. Again, during the reign of a just ruler, when the monarch was equitable, the kingdom governed by moral principles and the people submissive and obedient, did it descend from its empyreal heights to commend humanity. And should a pair of phœnixes appear it was understood to denote that a sage was on the throne and prosperity prevailed in the country. But it never came when the conduct of the people was such as to bring down the wrath of heaven by visitations of drought, the destruction of crops by locusts, or different forms of pestilence.



From a painting by Tanshin

The first appearance of this bird of unusual characteristics and qualities is recorded in the CH'I SHU CHI NIEN, "The Bamboo Books." Here it is stated that not only when the Yellow Emperor, Huang Ti, ascended the throne, but also when he was observing his ceremonial fasts in the seventh month of the fifth year of his reign (2693 B.C.) the *fêng* came to greet him.

It is likewise recorded that it appeared during the reign of the Emperor Yao (2356 B.C.); and again when the Emperor Shun (2255 B.C.) gave his *Hsiao chao*, a great opera, a number of *fêng*, attracted by the music, came and nested in the corniced galleries of his palace and in the trees of his park. The males filled the air with their songs and the females gambolled to the notes of their lords.

In the JIH YA CHAN I it is stated that a *fêng* appeared during the reign of the Emperor Che of the Shao Haou dynasty (1035 B.C.). The Emperor was so gratified and thankful that he named the different departments of state and their corresponding officials from birds, just as his predecessor, after similar omens, had used the names of dragons, clouds, and water. The Minister of State he called *Fêng-huang*; the Master of the Equinoxes, the *Yen-tzŭ* or Dark Swallow; the Master of the Beginning of

Spring, the *Luan* or Green Bird; the Master of the Close of Spring, the *Chê* or Red and Yellow Pheasant; and the Five Classes of Mechanics, the *Wu-chê* or Five Pheasants.



From a painting by Wu Wei. The Two Queens

Again, the official history of the Chin dynasty records that, in the third century A.D., during the reign of Shih Hu, a *fêng-huang* with a brood of nine took up its abode in the Imperial gardens. Shih Hu trained these birds to act as carrier doves, and in recognition of their services all Imperial edicts were written in the five colours of the bird and ever since have been known as *fêng chao*, “phoenix messages.” The Emperor, Shuan Ti, of the Han dynasty, first century B.C., also assumed the name of *Wu Fêng*, “Five Phoenixes,” because the bird appeared to him five times.

In the CONFUCIAN ANALECTS it is related that the great sage said, “When the *fêng-huang* does not come down to me I know that my doctrine will not be carried out during my life, for according to an ancient tradition, only when the government is successful does the *fêng* appear.”

Of this genus of divine bird there are a number of species. In the PAO WU CHIH it is recorded that there are five different families of *fêng*, each belonging to one of the Five Directions. The one at the East is called *Fa-ming*, “Light issuing”; the one at the South, *Chiao-ming*, “Light burning”; the one at the West, *Su-shuang*, “Severe frost”; the one at the North, *Yu-chang*, “Concealed growth”; the one at the Centre, *Fêng-huang*, “Essence of Fire.” To the latter, the JIH YA CHAN I refers as the *Shu-ying*, which signifies “Felicitous and perfect.” While *fêng* is the generic name of all birds of this family, it is the proper name of the supreme one presiding over the central region of the universe.



From a coloured woodcut by Kunitsuna. The *Hō-ō* and *Kiri-Branch*

Other names for the bird are derived from its colour, which differs considerably among the varieties. When the head and wings are red it is called *hung-fêng*; when blue, *yu-hsing*; when white, *hua-i*; when black, *yin-chu*; when yellow, *to-fu*.



From a coloured woodcut by Yeishō. Three Beauties of the *Chōji Ya*

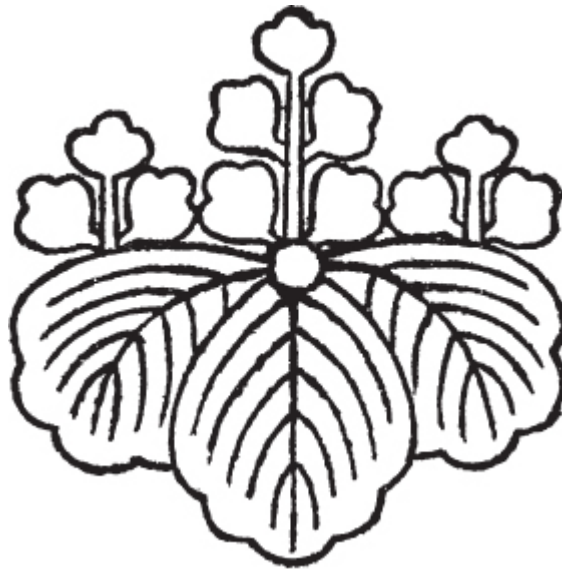
There also appear to be a number of variants from the supreme bird which retain some of its principal characteristics. Chief among these are the *lūan* and *yūan*, the azure-winged birds of Queen Hsi Wang Mu of the Western Paradise. These birds are also called *ch'ing-niao*, and were used as the messengers and steeds of the fairies of this celestial region.

It is related that when Hsi Wang Mu wished to favour a monarch or a sage with an audience, she would send her *lūan* birds to convey him to her jade palace in her heaven of heavens. This paradise—a most wonderful creation of the human imagination—is described in the ancient records as follows: “The southern gate of heaven was of deepest emerald glass, lucent and glistening as if fused in a precious cauldron. On either side were massive pillars around which twined pink-bearded dragons, cloud-riding and mist-dispensing. In the midst were two jade bridges whereon, standing amid glistening beams of ruby sunlit vapours, were cloud-aspiring phoenixes with iridescent plumage and cinnabar-coloured crests. In it were thirty-three pavilions, including those of the sun, the moon, and the stars; pavilions known as the Cloud-dividing; the Wave-collecting; the Purple-sunset; and the pavilion of Renewed-pleasure; each being sealed with the teeth of the Celestial Stag.” There were also three towers known as the Star of Longevity, the Star of Emolument, and the Star of Happiness.



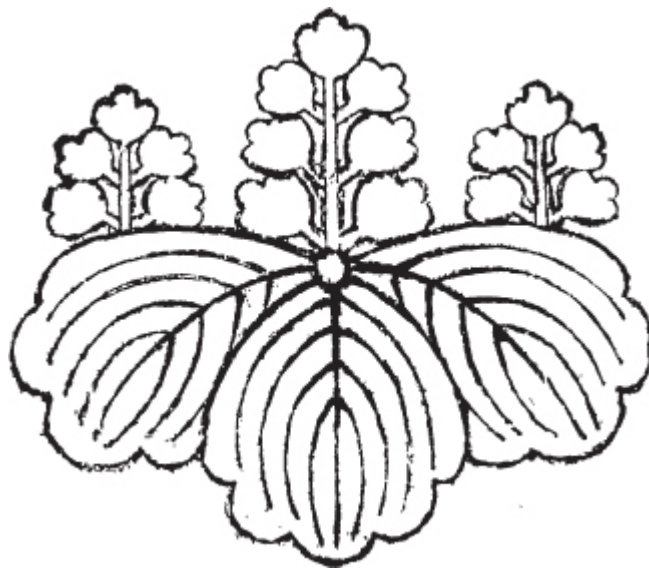
From a coloured woodcut by Harunobu. A *Geisha* Impersonating a Celestial Musician





The Crest of Hideyoshi

According to a Buddhist geography, this abode of the Immortals was said to have been situated on Mount Sumeru of the highest Himalayas—called Sumuli by the Chinese—a region so remote from the habitations of man that only a supernatural creature could fly there. This is also called the *Wo Chiao Shih*, “Rock of Purification,” because it towers into infinite space above seven concentric ranges of mountains, being the peak around which the universe revolves and from which the Four Directions radiate to the Four Continents.



The Imperial Crest

The Taoists generally represented their Immortals as being borne from their celestial abodes on equally divine creatures, mainly birds, but sometimes dragons and other mythological creatures. They likewise endowed them with a supernatural power to transport themselves anywhere regardless of distance or direction without any external aid.

Innumerable are the tales told of such flights. Most of them are related to Taoist hermits, both male and female, who, unhappy about the corruption of the world, retired to the mountains and practised austerity. In reward for this and the privations they suffered, they were finally borne away to the abode



of the Immortals on the backs of the *fêng*, *lián*, and *yüan* birds. One of these was Mei Fu, who had been a governor of the province of Nan Ch'ang in the Han dynasty. Another was Têng Yu, who, after passing thirty years in the Hêng Shan mountain, was visited by the genie, Wei Fujên. She appeared on a cloud and told him she had come to invite him to her palace in the skies. Then, some months later, two large green birds came and danced about him, and from their conduct he knew they were the messengers from the celestial lady. So he mounted one, and off they flew to their heavenly destination.

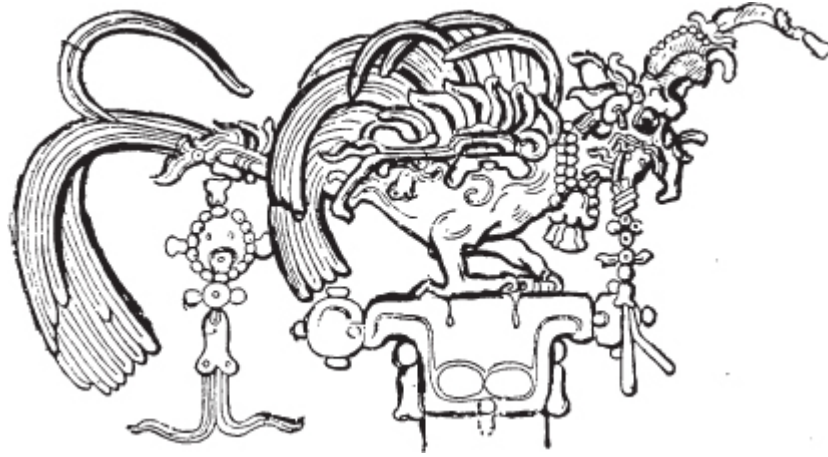
Many of these legends relate to female *rishi*. One pertains to Lung Yu, the daughter of Mu Kung, a king of Ch'in in the Chou dynasty, who fell in love with the young officer, Hsaio Shih, because he played the flute so beautifully. So the two were married and spent most of their time playing musical instruments. So entertaining was their music that all kinds of birds were, attracted by it; and they not only sang the most wonderful songs but likewise danced about them. One day the two musicians were surprised to see two extraordinarily beautiful birds descend from the clouds, and, like the others of the winged tribe, they sang and danced most wonderfully. When the young people went to greet them, the birds knelt, and when the couple thus invited mounted upon their backs, they flew away to the Western Paradise. The astonished king watched them disappear, but long after he could not see them, he heard the entrancing music from their lutes.



From a coloured woodcut by Koryūsai. The Golden Pheasant

A tale, differing somewhat from the foregoing, pertains to a princess who lived in the State of Shin during the Chou dynasty, entitled the *Fêng-huang Tai*, "Phoenix Terrace," is given in the following poem by Tsui Hao of the T'ang dynasty. "Our beautiful princess has flown away on the back of the

divine *Fêng*. The terrace she graced knows her no more. In our loneliness we contemplate the white clouds, expectant of hearing celestial strains, wondering if back of them do not lie the trees of Han Yang, as thick and no larger than grass; and the waters of Lake Yung Wu, small and transparent as crystal. It is only the clouds that separate us from the genii. Why does not the sun send forth its strong rays and clear the sky, so that we poor mortals may see the entrancing scenes?"



The *Quetzal* of the Aztecs



From the LI SHUI TS'UAN CHÜAN. T'ên Yu and the *Feng-huang*

The Western Paradise, the goal of the Taoists, was thought to be inaccessible except to the sages who, through the good offices of the *fêng-huang*, were transported there. According to the tradition,

there lay between it and this world a great desert that was inhabited by monstrous and dangerous animals, and the only possible way of crossing it was on the back of this swiftest of all birds.



From a painting by Fang Hêng

The Buddhists, adopting most of the Taoist traditions and practices, with varying modifications, endowed their heavenly visitants with the same mysterious power which, in art, they symbolized by long, gracefully flowing streamers. As such are their angels represented; but the celestial musicians were sometimes equipped with wings. The latter, however, were not a part of their anatomy, like those of the angels of Christendom, but belonged to a garment having tail feathers as well as wings, which gave these angelic beings the appearance of a phoenix with a human head and arms.



From a Chinese embroidery for an Imperial wedding

The phoenix, known by the Japanese as *hō-ō*, in Buddhist lore has become the symbol of wisdom and energy, for it is related that while Buddha was in meditation, it brought to him these sustaining qualities, and furthermore protected him from the assaults of the demon hosts by overspreading him with its mighty wings.

The Buddhists therefore claim that the virtuous *hō-ō* belongs to the Western Paradise, “The heaven of purple clouds and great visions,” which is sometimes referred to merely as “The West,” and to which, when dying, they expect to go.



From a Japanese porcelain plaque

In art, the *hō-ō* is seen to the best advantage in sculptured decorations on palaces, shrines, and temples, interesting examples of which may be found in the elaborate carvings of the shrines of the *Shōguns* of Shiba and Nikkō, and at the Nishi Hongwangji temple in Kyōto.



From the LI SHUI TS'HAN CH'UAN: Hsiao Chih charming the divine birds.



A crest of mediæval Japan.

Such carvings also adorn all Imperial structures, furniture, and equipage; in fact, so intimately was this mystic *hō-ō* associated with his Majesty's household, that his palace was known as the *hōketsu*, his chariot as the *hōren*, and his commands as *hōsho*.

A notable instance of the reverence in which the *hō-ō* was held by the Japanese is to be found in the construction and naming of a building known as the *Hō-ō-dō*, "Phoenix Hall," located at Uji near Kyōto. This was built about A.D. 1053 and is one of the nation's supreme achievements of



architecture. It was designed to typify a phoenix, its two-storied central parts being regarded as the body; the colonnades on the opposite sides, the wings; and the corridor at the rear, the tail.

In the pictorial arts, however, the phoenix was not popular. Paintings of it are rarely to be seen except as wall and screen decorations for palaces and temples.

It is generally combined with the *wu-tung* tree, the *Dryandra cordate*, the only one on which it was said ever to alight. Its counterpart in Japan is the *kiri no ki*, known scientifically as *Paulownia iniperialis*, the leaves and blossoms of which became the official crest of the Empress, while that of the Emperor consisted of the sixteen-petalled chrysanthemum. There are, however, two *kiri* crests, both of which are given in the illustrations. One, the *Go-shichi kiri*, has seven and five blossoms; and the other, the *Go-san kiri*, has five and three blossoms. The former is the Imperial *mon*, the other the crest of the great *Taikō*, Hideyoshi.



From a painting by Ch'ên Nan-p'in

In China the phoenix is the particular attribute of the Empress, as the dragon is of the Emperor, but this is not true of Japan. In both countries it is related to womankind and feminine affairs. It figures conspicuously at Chinese weddings, being worn on the bride's hood, called a *huang kao*, "phoenix cap," where it has the particular significance of "inseparable fellowship," suggested by the union of the *fêng* and *huang*. It represents the *Yin* qualities, while the dragon, worn by the groom, represents those of the *Yang*. It likewise figures at funerals, for it is the custom to bury the women in their bridal attire.

In both China and Japan it is a common motive in textile designs and may be found in embroideries, brocades, and tapestries. In these patterns it is often combined with the peony, the blossom which tradition has associated with the peacock, proving the latter's connection with the phoenix.

Its chief associate, however, is the dragon, the combination being another example of the *Yang* and *Yin* or *In-yo* principle of opposites; the dragon representing the positive *Yang*, and the phoenix the negative *Yin*. In poetry it is not uncommon to read lines like the following:

“From the pine forest the azure dragon ascends to the Milky Way; from the fragrant *wu-tung* the crimson phoenix aspires to the variegated cloud.”

And again:

“From wind-blown waves of restless seas the warring dragon challenges the peaceful phoenix soaring through the quiet skies, seeking the *wu-tung* tree.”

In the graphic arts this subject—as delineated on the Chinese embroidery for an Imperial wedding, and on the Japanese porcelain plaque—is frequently seen.

The relationship of these two fabulous creatures has existed from time immemorial, when together they appear to have made their advent into the Flowery Kingdom from some civilization of a shadowy past.

Of its origin there is no record. Some sinologists would trace a resemblance to the *roc* of the Arabs and the *garuda* of the Hindus, and particularly to the phoenix of the Greeks, so familiar to the occidental mind. The latter, however, which for generations has symbolized the resurrection or the renewal of life in all nature after the decay of death because it rose from its own ashes, differs in almost every essential from the *fêng-huang*. The only similarity in the legends pertaining to them is the description of the particular region where the two fabulous birds are believed to abide; the Taoist Paradise finding its counterpart in that of the Greek Elysium.

A more probable congener may be found by studying the tradition and mythology of the ancient Mayas, Toltecs, and Aztecs. These prehistoric peoples also worshipped a sacred bird, the *quetzal*, the sculptured image of which is to be found on the ancient temple ruins of Mexico and Central America. But this bird, the present inhabitants of these countries claim, was not a fabulous creature but a reality, since it still may be found in the most remote mountain regions of Mexico and Central America, while in Guatemala it is even now honoured as the national emblem. As the sacred sun-bird of the Toltecs it was the beloved attendant of Quetzalcoatl, the benevolent sun-god, of whom it was related, that wherever he went he not only brought manifold blessings and happiness, but the air became deliciously fragrant, and multitudes of birds of the most brilliant colouring sang about him. But of them all he favoured most the wondrous *quetzal*. Hence, after he went away, the people worshipped the bird, believing it to be the god himself.

Strange as it may seem, the qualities and characteristics attributed to this bird of ancient American lore are identical with those of *fêng-huang*, which, as before stated, was said to have come from the Western Paradise.

Could it not have been possible that the early colonists to China came from the American continent, and that they not only brought with them traditions of its sacred bird, but, while comparing the hardships of pioneering with the happier conditions of the past, formed the habit of referring to their native land as Paradise?

That the *fêng-huang* and the *quetzal* symbolize the same qualities is no more a chance coincidence than is the unusual use of feathers, which was so common to these two nations, notwithstanding that they were so remote from each other regarding both time and territory. Both Mexico and the Central American countries valued the *quetzal* feathers more than gold, and wrought them into their most important fabrications, ranging from objects of personal adornment to war banners. China likewise has her feathered products. Her jewellery, embellished with the azure featherlets of the kingfisher bird, is one of the treasured arts of the Orient; and that she used feathers in conjunction with painting is shown by a number of painted scrolls of the T'ang dynasty held in the celebrated collection of the Shōsō-in at Nara, Japan.

The pheasant, known to the Chinese as *chin-chê* and to the Japanese as *kiji* and *kigisu*, is often substituted for the phoenix. Being a native of China, it is not unlikely that it supplied some of the characteristics of the fabulous bird. It belongs to the *Hua Chung*, "Flowery Fowls," a pair of which are included among the twelve ancient figures which illustrate the commentators of the Sung dynasty. In China it symbolizes the beauty of virtue, but in Japan it is associated with mother-love, known as *yake no kigisu*, from its habit of saving its young when fire overtakes its home in the grain-field.

Both the pheasant and the phoenix are very beautiful decorative motives. The latter especially even apart from its exceptional colour, which offers all kinds of possibilities—its lithe, flexible body, sinuous neck, long flowing tail, and graceful wings—supplies a form that is convertible into manifold curves of beauty and adaptable to any enclosure, as exemplified in the given illustrations.

## CHAPTER V

# THE UNICORN

*Great and beautiful is the Ch'i-lin, the king of all animals!  
His virtue and not his horn is his protection,  
His kind heart and not his force and strength, his ruling power.  
As he reigns over all animals so should the Emperor govern his  
many kingdoms.*

HUEH TSUNG.



From a painting by Kakunen.

THE unicorn, known as the *ch'i-lin*, is the third of the *Ssü Ling*, “Four Divine Animals.” Like the phoenix, whose name *fêng-huang* is compounded from the masculine *fêng* and the feminine *huang*, so the name of the unicorn, *ch'i-lin*, is compounded from *ch'i*, the masculine, and *lin*, the feminine, although the animal is commonly known as *lin*.

Like the dragon and the phoenix, the unicorn is a chimera combining the parts and attributes as well as the characteristics of other creatures.

In the ancient writings it is described as having the head of a dragon, from which issues a single horn; the body of a stag, and the tail of an ox; while again it is alluded to as a cross between either a dragon and a cow, or a dragon and a deer.

But in its representations in the graphic and glyptic arts it is variously depicted according to the artists' understanding of its parts as exemplified in the accompanying illustrations, where it appears as a composite of a dragon and a stag or of a dragon and a mythical lion.

From the dragon it derives its head, scales, and flame-like appendages at the shoulders and hips; from the stag, its body, legs and hoofs; and from the lion, its mane and tail.

Sometimes it has but one horn, which is twisted; while again it has two, probably patterning after its mighty prototype. These horns, unlike those of other hoofed creatures, are fleshy and tipped with white hair.

Again, on its body, either straight or curled hair—suggesting the particoloured skin of a piebald horse—may displace the dragon scales; but it never fails to have the bare place which begins at the throat and extends over the chest, under the body and tail, to the very tip of the latter. On its back it carries either the carapace of the tortoise or a ridge of dorsal spines, while its mane and tail consist of bunches of straight hair and groups of spiral whorls.

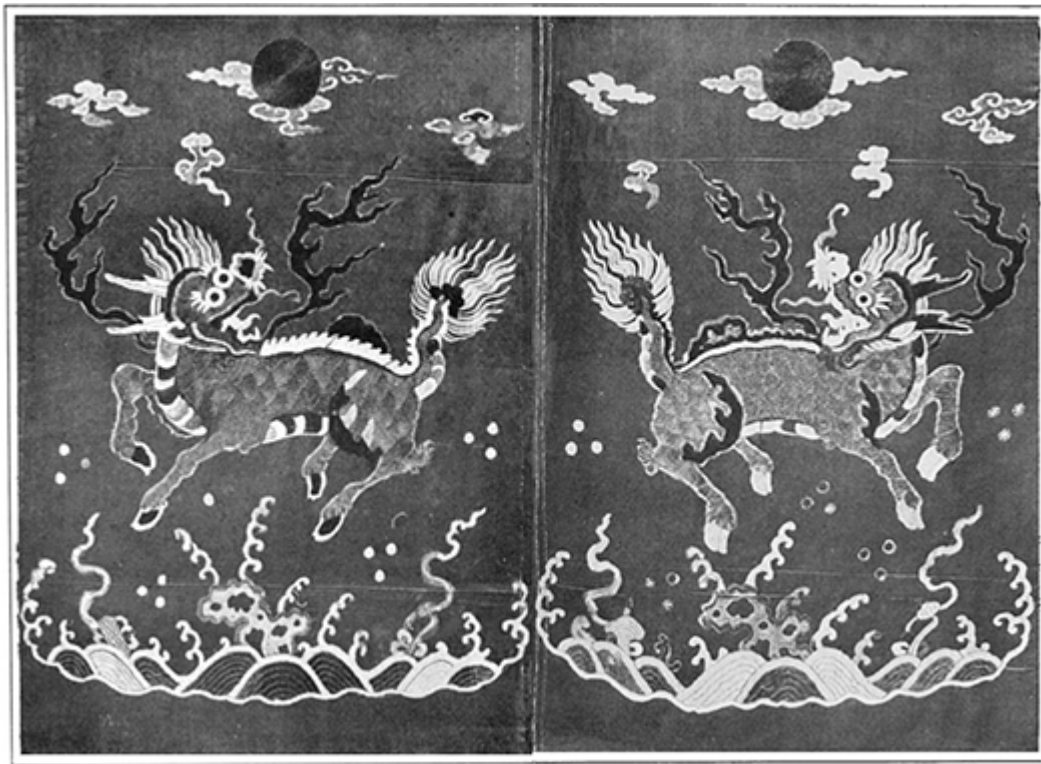
Its slender legs are adorned with tufts of hair, and its delicate feet consist of cloven hoofs.



From a woodcut by Eitaku. The *Kaiba*

It has five colours: red, green, violet, yellow, and blue which, in the old Chinese embroideries, are used in a most decorative manner. In these compositions, the body and legs of the creature are generally wrought with gold thread and the dorsal spines with white; the horns and hoofs, with yellow; the flame-like appendages, with red—this colour repeating itself in the lips, nose, ears, and comb-like features on the forehead; the pupils of the eyes with black surrounded by white against a blue mass; the strands of hair in the mane and tail, with the five colours which repeat themselves successively; the whirling tufts of hair in the tail and on the legs, with green; and the bare flesh of the throat, chest, body, and tail, again with the five colours arranged as before on rounding cross bands.

Its body, which is twelve feet high, is composed of the five primordial elements: earth, air, water, fire, and ether, although the divine creature is said to represent the principle of fire. Its call is musical, “the middle notes thereof being like a monastery bell.” Its movements are stately and delicate, for it never hurries. It steps so lightly as not to produce any sound; yet it is the swiftest of all animals, being able to traverse ten thousand *li* in a day. It rambles only over the choicest lands, selecting them with great care. It displays such great wisdom that it never can be trapped, nor, when grown, be taken alive.



From a Chinese embroidery

It attains the age of two thousand years, but always lives alone. It is held in such reverence by all creatures of the animal kingdom that, whenever it appears, they follow in flocks, rendering to it an homage similar to that bestowed upon an emperor.

Its appearance in the world, like that of the phoenix, is always a happy omen, for it is ever an auspicious creature. It comes to humanity when great events foreshadow the birth of a great soul, of a being who may become a teacher of the universal mysteries, or a monarch of wisdom whom heaven has decreed shall govern mankind.

According to the CHUN CHI WEI, a book of antiquity, the advent of the *ch'i-lin* is marked by the simultaneous appearance of the heavenly constellation known as *Sui-hsing*, "Year star," of which the creature is the spirit. This constellation dominates like a zodiacal sign, always bringing good government with prosperity and longevity to the people.





From a painting by Tsunenobu

In this book it is further stated, that “as the *ch'i-lin* has but one horn, so the world should have but one ruler.”

There are many traditions, according to the ancient records, of the *ch'i-lin* appearing in the Imperial parks during the reigns of the Emperors of the Golden Age of Antiquity: Huang Ti, Yao, Shun, Yü, and T'ang. Such appearance was always regarded as the signal of the reign of an upright and just monarch.



From a Chinese embroidery

The divine creature, however, is most identified with Confucius, for at his birth it appeared to his mother. Numerous are the legends relating to this association. One is that of the *Su Shên Chi*, which states that the great sage had a habit of dreaming of wandering in a strange land. Upon one of these nightly expeditions, he saw issuing from a locality a wonderful red light, the rays of which reached to

the very clouds. Amazed at this unusual sight he called his disciples and drove to the place. Here he found the village by the name of *Feng Pei*, and in it he saw a child riding a *ch'i-lin* which had a wounded foot. Feeling sorry for the creature he descended from his chariot to render aid, but, while examining the foot, to his surprise he saw in the mouth of the *ch'i-lin* a book which the animal presented to him. It was eight inches long and three wide and contained twenty-four characters from which Confucius read that an Emperor of great might possessing the virtue of five would rule the nation at the expiration of the Chou dynasty, and he would be known as the *Lin*, "Red Emperor." Later generations have regarded this legend in the light of a prophecy of the coming of the great rulers of the Han dynasty.



From a woodcut by Eitaku. The *Kirin*

Another version of the origin of this remarkable book which contained the sacred doctrines, and known as the *LIN SHU*, is that it was brought by the *ch'i-lin* to Huang Ti, the Yellow Emperor. The *LIN SHU* issuing from the mouth of the *ch'i-lin* is shown in an accompanying illustration.

A well-known legend related in connection with the sage is that of the killing of a *ch'i-lin* by an official hunting party which, not being familiar with the divine animal, did not recognize it; but when the creature was described to Confucius he at once knew it to be a *ch'i-lin*. So great was his distress that he wept. Then to express his feelings and commemorate the event, he wrote the famous poem:

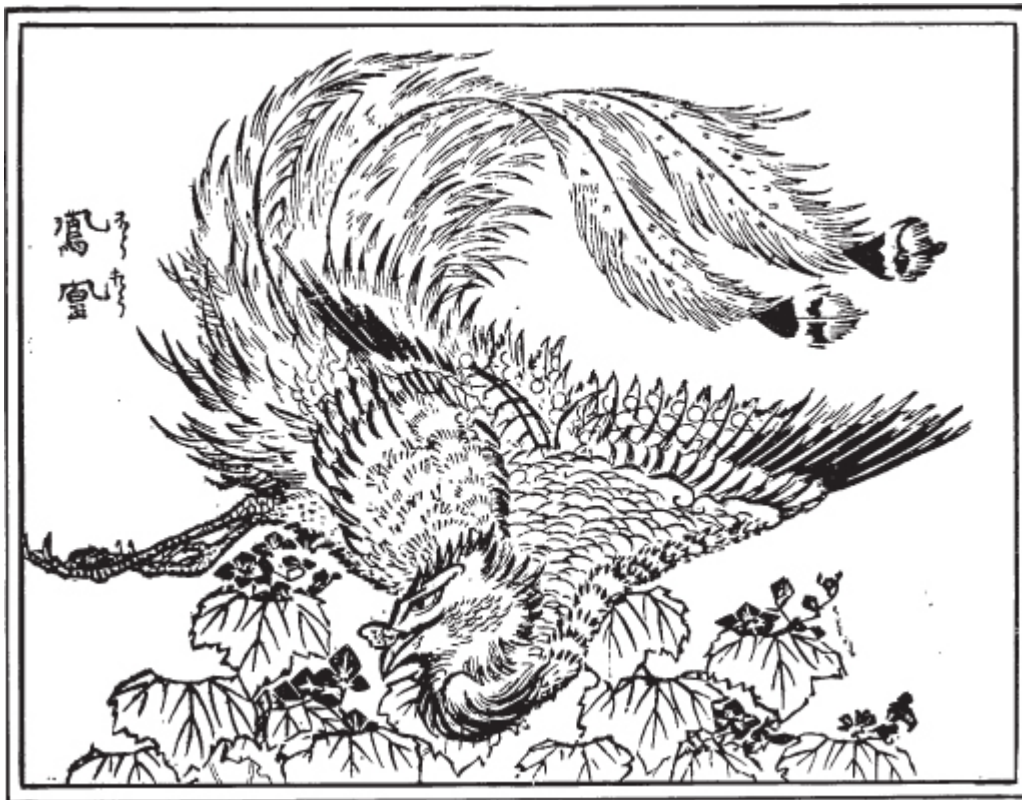
When the T'ang and the Yü reigned the *Ch'i-lin* and *fêng-huang* came for a greeting.  
But now is not the time for such a visitation.  
What makes thee appear, just to die?  
O, *Ch'i-lin*, O, *Ch'i-lin*,  
I am heartily sorry for thee!

This incident occurred about two years before the death of the sage, at a time when he was more than discouraged at the troubled conditions of the times, and realized his inability to effect a change. He therefore considered this unhappy incident as a bad omen, and laid aside the history he was writing, the *CH'UN CH'IU*, and never worked upon it again.



From a porcelain tile in a Chinese screen

As the *ch'i-lin* was so intimately associated with Confucius, and since his energies were so seriously concentrated upon the formation of a plan for a perfect government, the divine creature quite consistently became the symbol of this idea. Then again, as good government was ever regarded as dependent upon wise statesmen—who in addition had to be scholars—the *ch'i-lin* likewise became the symbol of this type of man. Confucius himself was called “The Elf of the *Ch'i-lin*,” and an extraordinarily bright boy was said to be the son of the *ch'i-lin*. Illustrative of the latter, it is related that during the Feast of the Lanterns occurring on the fifteenth day of the first month, during the New Year’s festivities, a lantern representing a boy riding a *ch'i-lin* is offered for sale. The purchaser presents it to a friend with the expression, “I wish you may be blessed with a talented son”; implying that to be able to ride the *ch'i-lin* betokens universal ability which will ultimately result in the boy’s becoming a scholar or a mandarin.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. The *Hō-ō*



From a wooden screen-panel decorated with carved hard-stone ornaments

The accompanying illustrations include Chinese embroideries of a boy riding the *ch'i-lin*. Such representations are said to invite the divine animal to bring a distinguished son to the family; hence they are hung about the house.





From a Chinese porcelain plate. The *Fêng-huang* and *Ch'i-lin*

A legend relating to the appearance of the *ch'i-lin* is associated with the Emperor Wu Ti (c. 140 B.C.), which states that a white *ch'i-lin* was born of a cow. It had a single horn, but it was exceptional in that it had not only five legs but an aura of the five colours which radiated from a body covered with dragon scales. In every respect it answered the description of the fabulous creature, but it refused nursing by its mother and therefore died. Notwithstanding that it passed away, many poems were written in its honour, such as the following:



From a Chinese embroidery



*Ch'i-lin*, why came you to this world to leave it so soon? Was it because our noble Emperor is so modest that he could not abide the flattery of the statesmen which your appearance would cause?

Divine creature, you came so unexpectedly and you go so unexpectedly because you find no Confucius to extol and honour.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. The *Kirin*

Another legend is also recorded of the same Emperor, Wu Ti, which relates that every year on the seventh day of the seventh month he was visited by the fairy queen, Hsi Wang Mu. For these occasions he made extensive preparations by having his palace cleansed and put in order, after which he commanded everyone to maintain absolute silence. Then shortly before midnight a great white cloud would rise in the south-west, and the air would ring with the laughter of the fairies mingling with the strains of beautiful music. This cloud would sail towards the palace, and, lowering, would reveal the beautiful queen mounted on her phoenix steed, and accompanied by a troop of maidens, some riding green *lüan* birds, and others white *ch'i-lin*. One of these fairies, Chi Shang Yuan Fugên, being a *rishi*, was honoured by the Emperor who, graciously bowing before her, requested that she reveal to him the secrets of the *Tao*. But the celestial lady informed him that an understanding of the doctrine was beyond his comprehension because of his carnal propensities. She, however, presented him with a book entitled LING FEI, "Spirit Flying," which contained twelve chapters treating of the mystic rites of the religion. This feminine sage, riding the *ch'i-lin*, is shown in one of the accompanying illustrations, while another *rishi*, Mei Fu, is depicted riding a *fêng-huang*.



From a wooden screen-panel decorated with carved hard-stone ornaments

Again, in the official records of the Emperor Chên Tsung of the Sung dynasty (A.D. 1068–1086), it is related that a *ch'i-lin* was presented as a tribute from the people of Anan in Cochin China. It was made an event for congratulatory poems. One by Huang Ting Chien is as follows:

The *ch'i-lin* has feet, but never steps upon living things; a horn, but never strikes an enemy. He walks and is joyful. Wherever he goes he carries the spirit of spring. He embodies the virtue of our Emperor which is beyond anyone's power to describe.



From a woodcut in the LI SHUI TS'UAN CHÜAN. The *Rishi* Chi Shang Yüan



From a Chinese embroidery

Another legend pertaining to this unusual animal states that, in the Ming dynasty (A.D. 1368–1628), in the Honan province, a *ch'i-lin* also was born of a cow but likewise failed to live. That it was in reality a divine animal could not be questioned, for its advent into this troubled world was exactly like the birth of a dragon. A storm raged furiously, and torrential rains with thunder and lightning filled the air. The wind blew a fierce gale, uprooting trees and wrecking houses. The people were terrified and the whole animal world united in a chorus of strange and weird cries of distress. However, notwithstanding, the people were so grateful for this extraordinary event that many poems were written by the officials in honour of the Emperor, who also was so gratified that he granted a general amnesty to all criminals. The following is one of the poems written at this time:

The *ch'i-lin* has in times past been paid as a tribute from foreign countries, but now it is born in the heart of our own land. The fact that it died does not prove that our Emperor is not a great man, nor that his reign is not successful. All creatures are excited by this great event; even the skies and the weather are changed. The people of this district are indeed happy and fortunate, having had the opportunity of having this divine creature in their midst, if even for so short a time.



From a Chinese embroidery

The *ch'i-lin* is known as a creature of pre-eminent integrity and supreme gentleness, a paragon of virtue and the noblest of all the three hundred and sixty kinds of the hairy animals. It exhibits such mercy and kindness of disposition toward all living things that in its movements over the earth it not only steps so lightly as to leave no footprint nor to tread upon a living insect, but it even refuses to eat any growing plants. So powerful for good is its influence that when it is among other animals they lose all sense of fear of each other as well as all disposition to harm one another.

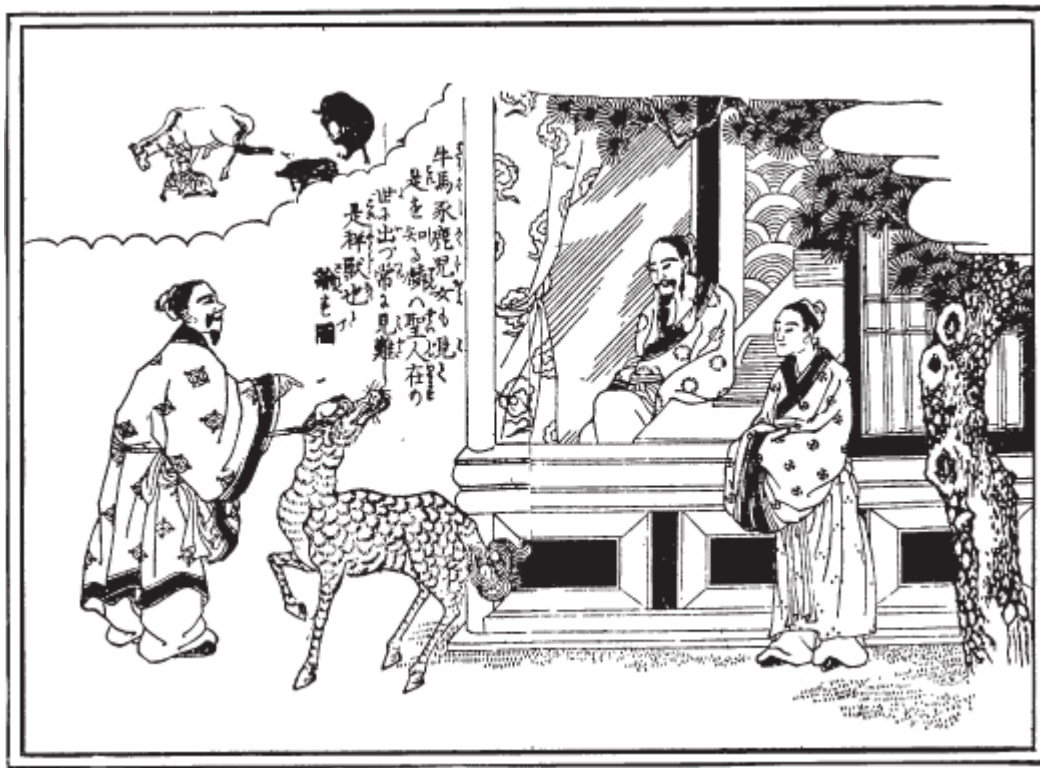




Its principal attribute is its horn—which is the symbol of benevolence, for being of a fleshy substance it denotes the absence of any desire to fight.

In Japan, the *ch'i-lin* is known as the *kirin*. It is an importation from China, hence there are no national traditions concerning it. As a decorative motive it may be found among all the arts, but it is quite conspicuous in the carvings of temples and shrines, generally in combination with the *fêng-huang*. It is also variously represented in the illustrated books such as the *MANGWA* of Hokusai, of Eitaku, and others, where, as in “The *Kaiba*” of a given illustration, it looks more like a horse than a stag.

The origin of the unicorn is veiled in mystery, but without doubt it came from the same source whence sprang the dragon and the phoenix. It is, however, interesting to note that it has played as important a part in the Occident as in the Orient; for it figures on the archaic cylinders of Assyria and Babylonia, on the obelisks of Nimroud, in the catacombs of Rome, and the heraldry of Great Britain.

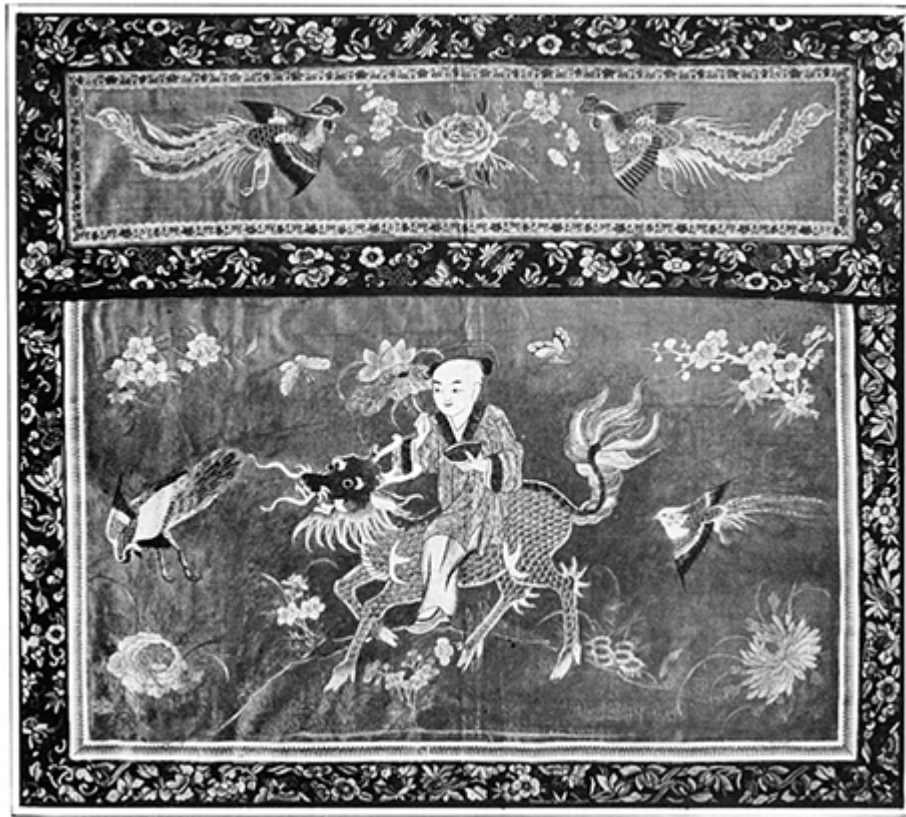


From a woodcut by Kokushosai. The Visitation of a *Ch'i-lin*

Again, Herodotus, Pliny, and Cæsar refer to it in their writings, and while calling it the Wild Ass they really are describing the unicorn.

The occidental representation of the creature differs from that of its oriental counterpart in that it generally appears as a horse with a single twisted horn growing out of its head. But strange as it may seem—quite the reverse from the dragon and the phoenix—its symbology is the same in both the East and the West; for it is ever distinguished for its purity of mind. This conception is derived from the belief of its being a water-conner, as which it was felt to be able to render a supreme service not only to humanity but also to all animals. For it is related that in the wilderness, where it lived among all kinds of loathsome creatures which contaminated the springs and streams, it would stir the waters with its magic horn and neutralize all the venom and poison deposited there, changing what might have been a deadly potion into a refreshing draught. Hence it is related that all animals would wait for the coming of the unicorn in order that they might drink in safety.





From a Chinese embroidery

For this reason the horn of the unicorn was believed to possess the potency of disarming all poisons of their effects and of changing the deadliest draught into a wholesome refreshment. Therefore, in the days when “the poison chalice too frequently crept upon the festive board” this horn, particularly when fashioned into a drinking cup, was regarded as so valuable a possession that it was said “to be worth a city.”

The significance of purity attached to it caused the early Christians to use it as a symbol of the Saviour, who was frequently referred to as “the horn of our salvation.” There are a number of Biblical references to it. In Ps. xcii. 10 we read:

But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn,

and again in Deut. xxxiii. 17:

His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns.

The antidotal qualities of the horn were taken to symbolize particularly the power of Christ in conquering and destroying sin. In this connection it is portrayed in the Catacombs.

As an emblem of purification it was undoubtedly held by the orientals, for it is one of the *Pa Pao* “Eight Taoist Symbols.” It may be found on Chinese mandarin coats and other embroideries, where it floats on the conventional waves which form the lower part of these compositions. In this form it is generally embellished by small circular jewels and the flying streamers common not only to all deities but also to their attributes and emblems.

That the *ch'i-lin* was originally derived from a real creature there can be no doubt, but its progenitor has undergone many changes in its physical parts as well as its mental qualities.

Naturalists attribute the inception of the idea of such a creature to the birth of some hybrid, a sort of missing link between the creatures equine, cervine, and bovine, which were contemporaneous with prehistoric man, and which as monstrosities reappear in the few surviving families.

In art the *ch'i-lin* may be found in the different sculptured forms appearing in the round: as in wood, porcelain, brass, and bronze. In the graphic representations it is most extensively used in connection with embroideries, while it also may be seen on porcelains, but it rarely appears in painting in either China or Japan. The Tsunenobu of the accompanying illustration is an exception.

Its chief associate is the phoenix, the two being combined because they both are regarded as the harbingers of prosperity and happiness.

This relationship is shown in the given illustrations of a Chinese porcelain plate, the pair of Chinese wooden screen-panels, the two woodcuts by Hokusai, and the Chinese embroidery.

In the Occident, however, the lion has displaced the auspicious bird; hence the subject, "The Lion and the Unicorn," which was used to symbolize the warfare between good and evil. Spencer in his FAERIE QUEEN used it metaphorically when he referred to the animosity which once existed between England and Scotland, as follows:

Like a lyon whose imperiall poure  
A proud rebellious unicorn defyes.

Later, when, during the reign of James VII, England and Scotland were united, the British lion and the Scottish unicorn became incorporated into the arms of Great Britain.

The subject of the "Lion and the Unicorn" is, however, of ancient origin, as old as the civilizations of Assyria and Babylonia, when it represented the conflict between the sun and the moon, the lion symbolizing the sun and the unicorn the moon. The British Museum possesses an Egyptian papyrus of the Roman period representing the two creatures playing at what appears to be a game similar to chess.

As found in the Orient, the unicorn or *ch'i-lin* may be regarded as another of the innumerable devices from the natural world which the philosophers and religious teachers of old invented to promulgate their doctrines. These wise men of ancient times realized that moral instruction, to be effective, must be given in a manner that accords with the interests of mankind. They therefore devised symbols which not only should make an appeal to the human love of the unusual, the weird, and the mysterious, but should be embodied in forms of such beauty that they would be a constant source of attraction and delight. Nor was this all, for in order that these symbols might ever be before the people, teaching their important lessons, it was planned that they should be used to adorn the familiar things of daily life. Hence, whenever the *ch'i-lin* is seen, it always reminds the observer of the virtue of being gentle, just, and benevolent.

THAT THE UNICORN IS A SPIRITUAL BEING IS BEYOND ALL DOUBT. HYMNED IN THE "ODES,"  
IMMORTALIZED IN "SPRINGS AND AUTUMNS," IT HAS FOUND A PLACE IN THE WRITINGS OF ALL  
AGES. WOMEN AND CHILDREN ALIKE KNOW THAT IT IS A PORTENT OF GOOD.

HAN WÊN-KUNG, T'ANG DYNASTY.

Giles Translation.

## CHAPTER VI

# THE TORTOISE

*Wondrous and beautiful is the Divine Tortoise!  
Its back, by mystic signs, with sun and moon,  
Reveals the code of Yang and Yin.  
Glowing golden in the sunlight  
Or lustered jade-like by the moonbeams,  
It flames and trails its tail.*



From painting by Chiura

THE tortoise, known to the Chinese as *kuei*, is the fourth of the *Ssŭ Ling*, “Four Fabulous Animals.” Unlike its companions—which are composites, consisting of the parts, attributes, and potentialities of other animals—it is a natural creature, which, becoming immortal through the great longevity of ten thousand years, has acquired not only the dragon attributes of ears and flaming tentacles at the shoulders and hips, but a long hairy tail. This latter feature, however, is not entirely supernatural, for in the Orient it is not uncommon to see the tortoise with a long graceful appendage flowing behind it as it swims, due to a growth of plant parasites on the shell. The Chinese, in recognition of the beauty of this green mantle, have conferred upon the little reptile the title of “The Green Dressed Messenger.”

It also belongs to *Ssŭ Fang*, another group of animals differing from the *Ssŭ Ling*, which was used by the Taoist astrologers to symbolize the spirits which preside over the Four Directions, or the Four Quarters of the Universe. These are shown in the accompanying illustrations, where the uranoscope is depicted upon two ancient objects. On one, a clay tile, it is inscribed; and on the other, a steel mirror-back, it is modelled in bas-relief; the latter is a replica of the mirror which is one of the *Sanshū no Shinki*, “Three Sacred Relics of Japan,” kept in the shrine at Ise. It is of Chinese workmanship, having been brought to the Island Empire at a very early time.

This uranoscope, representing the Four Directions or Four Quarters of the Universe, was evolved from the observation of the revolution of the northern constellation, Ursa Major, around the North Star, Polaris, which the early Chinese knew corresponded with the four seasons. Hence, the Black Tortoise Entwined by the Serpent, and known as the Sombre Warrior—which occupies the lower place on this map of the heavens—became the symbol of winter; the Blue Dragon of the east, which was placed at the left, the symbol of spring; the Vermilion Bird of the south, which was placed at the top, the symbol of summer; and the White Tiger of the west, which was placed at the right, the symbol of autumn.

The reason for combining the tortoise and serpent has been a source of particular concern to sinologists, and although different explanations are given they are not quite satisfactory.

The common theory is that the tortoise was believed by the Chinese to be exclusively of the feminine sex and that only through the serpent could the species be perpetuated. This view naturally caused the creature to be despised and its name to be held in disrepute. Hence arose the expression of ignominy, "progeny of a tortoise," significant of "knowing no father." But this attitude toward the little reptile did not exist before the time of Confucius, for in ancient times the tortoise was so highly regarded that its name was taken as a mark of honour.

But when the great philosopher taught that the tortoise carried a record of the Eight Virtues on its back because otherwise it could not remember them, he placed the stigma of irresponsibility upon the animal, which led it to be accused of almost any immorality.

A more reasonable explanation for this singular alliance may be derived from its use as a symbol on flags connected with warfare, to which reference is made in the excerpt from the poem entitled: "The Prosperous Condition of the King's Flocks and Herds."

And now the herdsmen lie and dream  
And people all like fishes seem ;  
And every snake and tortoise flag  
Is turned into a falcon flag.

The falcon flag symbolized peace because it was the banner carried during hunting expeditions. The flag bearing the device of the northern constellation, herewith shown, was not a war flag, but a processional banner, representative of one of the Four Seasons.



From an ancient Hindu drawing

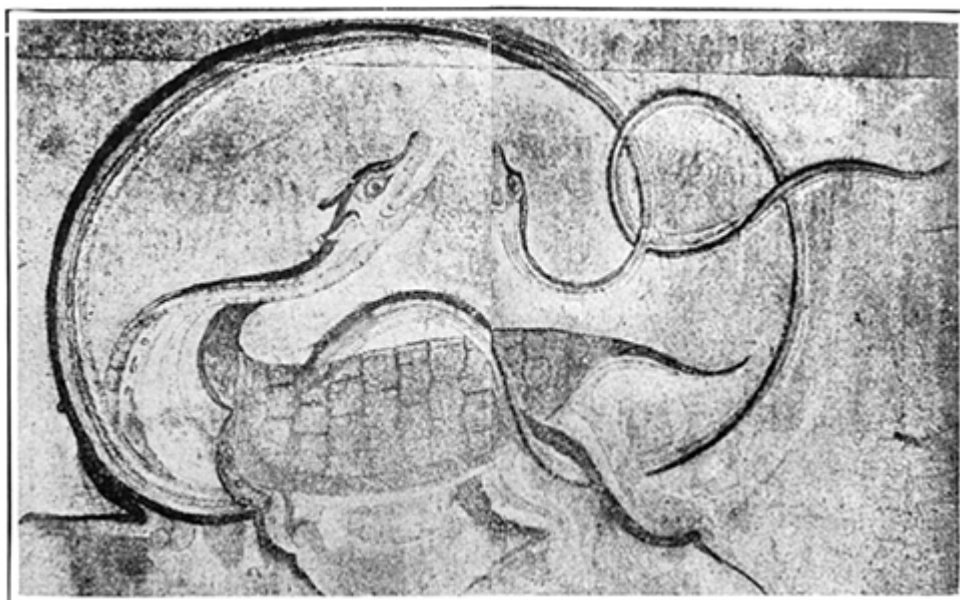


From an ancient Chinese clay tile

The tortoise and serpent standard was not only the particular device of a general, but was always carried in front of and at the rear of an army. It is therefore more than likely that this pair of reptiles—in what appears to be a deadly embrace—furnish an example of the tactics of warfare; for in this situation neither of the opponents is able to attack the other. The serpent is unable to crush the shell of the tortoise or injure its vital parts; while the tortoise, because of its short neck, cannot reach the serpent. The Chinese say, “When the dragon and tiger fight, both die, but when the tortoise and serpent fight, neither dies.”



From a Chinese ink-rubbing. Fu-yen Yeng-fu, God of the North

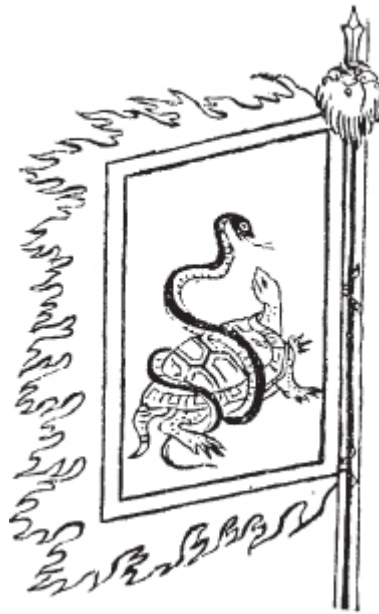


From a Korean temple fresco



According to the annals of the Chinese classics, the Dark Warrior was the emblem of the Emperor Huang Ti (2693 B.C.), and used on his banner. And again, in the LI KI, another classic, it is related that it was the standard of Fu-yen Yeng-fu, who was worshipped as the Guardian of the North since the earliest days of the nation. It is, however, an historical fact that the cult of Fu-yen Yeng-fu was introduced into China from Tonkin, a province of Cochin China, when this country was conquered in 111 B.C.

This deity appears to be known under different names, for in the historical records of a Tonkinese temple he is known as Huyen Yu, Tran Vu, and again as Tran Thien, and described as a primitive hero who killed the fox and the tiger, conquered the serpent, and enslaved the tortoise.



From an old Chinese book. The Flag of the Dark Warrior

The temple of Fu-yen Yeng-fu on the banks of the great lake north of Hanoi, built in the eleventh century, contains a bronze statue which the French designated as the Grand Buddha, but which in reality is a representation of the spirit of the presiding genius of the North. This bronze image—a replica of the original, which had crumbled with age—was placed there in 1680. It represents an aged warrior, seated, having a beard and long hair. His left hand, with extended finger, points upward and his right hand holds a serpent-entwined sword which rests on a tortoise.



From an ancient Chinese mirror-back

This description tallies in most respects with the deity of the stone-rubbing of the accompanying illustration. The latter, however, has the additional interesting feature of having most of the drawing defined by lines of Chinese ideographs giving the scriptures of the cult of Fu-yen Yeng-fu, which appear to be closely related to that of the Taoists.

In the passages of the text, inscribed on the background of the rubbing, it relates that this stone was discovered through a miracle. The natives of that locality, for some time, having noticed a singular and mystifying light emanating from the ground, dug at the spot in search of the cause of the strange phenomenon, and came upon the stone. When it was brought forth from the place where it had lain for centuries, it was so imposing that all present paid it great homage.

The Japanese also worshipped the God of the North, whom they designated as *Myōken Bosatsu*. As shown in the accompanying illustration, he appears as a young prince holding a sword and standing on a tortoise upon which lies a serpent. He is known as “The Mysterious and Wonderful”; the deification of Polaris, the North Star; the protector of the welfare of Creation and worshipped in the Nichiren temples.

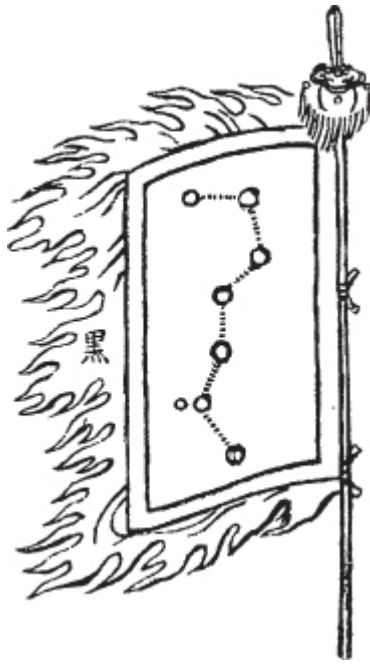


From a Japanese shrine image. Myōken *Bosatsu*, the Spirit of Polaris

Another version, explaining the association of the tortoise and serpent, comes from the Buddhists who—finding it necessary to incorporate into their pantheon Taoistic deities, and admit into their doctrine Taoistic ideas—invented the following legend to justify the adoption:

An evil tortoise, defying the Law of the Faith, attacked the Lord Buddha; but, being overcome by the holy influence emanating from the divine presence, sought to escape by running into the river. Thither Sākya pursued him with a hair from his head which, when thrown into the water, instantly turned into a serpent and enveloped the tortoise. Then—true to the moral of every Buddhist legend—the evil tortoise was overcome and later became converted.

While these theories are most interesting and make their appeal to the imagination, the actual source of the tortoise and serpent association comes from the cult of sun worship, of whose early existence in China there is sufficient evidence.



From an old Chinese book. The Flag of the Northern Constellation.

The tortoise and serpent were among the first totems of the Polar race, and while it may seem consistent that the cult migrated to China from India, there is evidence that it came from a nation of a remote past from which India likewise may have derived its culture.

Discoveries in South and Central America have proved that sun and serpent worship was practised by the ancient Mayan peoples; for not only do the sun symbol and feathered serpent decorate their marvellous monuments, but some of these are also made in the shape of the tortoise, to which fact the adjoining illustration testifies.

To Hindu literature civilization is indebted for the preservation of the traditions of the Solar race. For in the BRĀHMANAS it is stated that Kāśyapa was the progenitor of gods and men, and Kāśyapa is referred to in some places as the Polar Star, and in others as the Tortoise; in fact, the word *kāśyapa* means tortoise. This parallels the Chinese view of the relation of the tortoise to the northern constellation.



From a drawing of an ancient Mayan monument

In another Hindu genesis, the tortoise appears to be the first created of living creatures; for the following is asserted in one of the BBĀHMANAS: “Prajāpati, one of the forefathers who begat various classes of beings, evolved the waters out of *Vak* or ‘The Word.’ Thence an egg arose. He touched it and let it exist. Then he said ‘May I generate this, the earth, from these waters!’ He then compressed the egg and threw it into the waters, and the substance which flowed from it into the sea became a tortoise, and that which spurted upwards became that which is produced above and beyond the waters.”



From a Japanese bronze candlestick

The Chinese have a similar myth. They claim that Pan-ku, “The Embryo”—the first being hatched from chaos by the dual powers, the *Yang* and *Yin*—had a tortoise for his attendant when he chiselled out the world.

But it is with the deluge that the tortoise is most identified. In India the *Kūrma Avatār*, or tortoise incarnation of Vishnu—the Preserver—was undertaken in order to recover the sacred writings and other treasures lost in the deluge. As a tortoise, he descended to the bottom of the sea, where he permitted his broad shelly back to serve as a pivot upon which the gods, using the great serpent Vasūki as a rope, twirled the great mountain Mandara—also called Sumeru and Mêru—thereby churning up the Sea of Milk producing the nectar *Amrita*, amongst other of the Fourteen Treasures and Priceless Things.





From a Chinese bronze. Commemorating a Buddhist Sage

Again, in China, there is a tradition that the original hieroglyphics, which ultimately evolved into the written characters of the nation, were derived from the markings on the back of a tortoise which arose after a great flood—which may have been the Deluge. Concerning this tradition, as usual, there are different accounts. One claims that it was to the legendary ruler, Huang Ti, that the tortoise presented itself; while another confers this honour upon the Emperor Yü, who lived several centuries later, and who has been styled the Conqueror of the Flood.

Egypt also has such a tradition, proved by the two tortoises in the sign of the scales—the measure of the inundation—which not only relates the tortoise to the Deluge, but also to time and the tides.



From a Japanese bronze candlestick

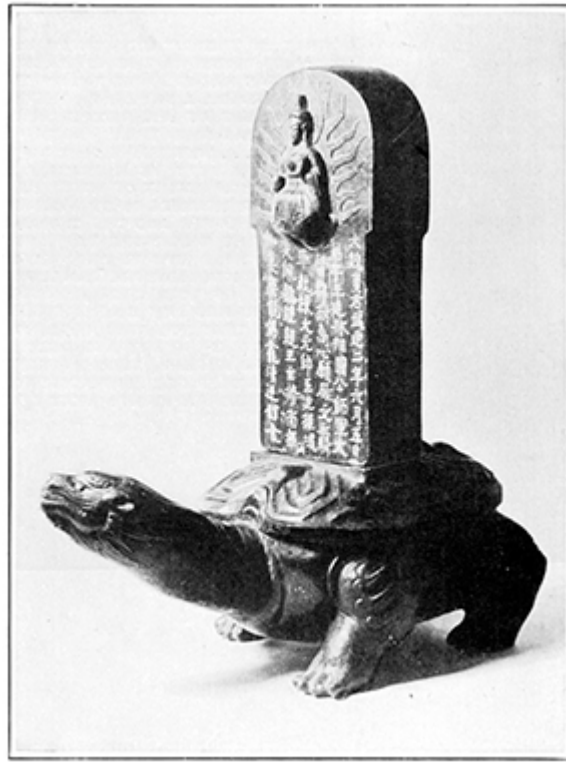
Again, on Mithraic monuments, the tortoise is delineated in the zodiacs there displayed, pointing to a similar significance.



From a drawing of an ancient Korean monument

The tortoise also figured quite extensively as an ancestor among many primitive peoples. The Kharwars and Manjhis of Mirzapur worshipped clay images of tortoises in their homes in commemoration of the tortoise that once conveyed their ancestor across a river during a flood.

The Gonds have a similar tradition, but in their case the tortoise saved their ancestor, Lingo, from the clutches of an alligator. The Aztecs also claim that their predecessors, who were the first settlers of their country, came out of a great cave and travelled on the backs of tortoises in many directions, founding cities and towns wherever they went.



From a Chinese bronze. Commemorating a Buddhist Sage

The use of the tortoise as an object of support, figuring in many traditions, had its origin in the belief that the animal was the Base of the Beginning of Things, due to its habit of burying itself under the ground and emerging at regular periods. For this reason it came to be considered not only the emblem of time but of the earth, and as such it was addressed by some nations as “Mother.” Hence the Hindu idea, also shared by the North American Indians, that the earth rests on the back of a tortoise which, when weary, shifts from one foot to another and causes an earthquake. The same belief exists among the Chinese, but their tortoise is six-legged. They also speak of the *nago*, “a big tortoise,” a thousand *li* in circumference, which supports mountains on its back, hence the saying, “*Ao ti ch’êng ti*” signifying “Supporting the earth on the feet of the tortoise.”

This latter thought doubtless accounts for the numerous large monuments, memorial tablets of stone supported by immense tortoises, which are distributed all over China and Korea, notable examples of which occur at the Ming tombs near Peking and in Seoul. But it is a source of great regret that frequently, in the country districts, these monuments are mutilated, the heads of the tortoises having been knocked off by natives, who entertain a prevalent superstition that the animals roam about at night and eat their crops.

These monuments are generally of a single type, consisting of a stele or incised stone, having the width of the tortoise, with a height three times its width, and capped by a sculptured design of entwined dragons. The Korean monument shown in the accompanying illustration differs from the above description in that an elaborately carved cubical stone is substituted for the narrow slab. This is the monument of King Taiso Buretsu (A.D. 654–660), erected at his tomb at Saigakuri, south-west of Keishu, and regarded as one of the finest to be found in this country.

A notable example of a tortoise tablet in China is the Nestorian monument—known by the Chinese as the *Ching Ch'iao-pei*—which records in its inscriptions the introduction of Syrian Christianity into China. A replica of it may be seen in the Metropolitan Museum of New York.

Among the given illustrations are reproductions of two Chinese bronzes, both examples of the Taoist tortoise memorial tablets adopted by the Buddhists. In one, the four figures whirling around the seated Buddha are arranged in the form of a *swastika*—the sacred Buddhist symbol which is believed to have had its origin in the ancient Taoist uranoscope representing the revolution of the constellation of the Great Bear around the North Star. This bronze has a seal on it, which gives a date of the Ming dynasty. The other, according to the inscription on the tablet, was made in the Wei dynasty, nearly fifteen hundred years ago.

The Hindus also used the tortoise as a support. Their first conception of the universe was that the earth rested on four elephants which, in turn, stood on the back of a tortoise with a serpent enveloping it, as shown in the given illustration of an ancient Hindu drawing.

The Egyptians likewise found the tortoise valuable as a structural base. In the temple at Meaco, in addition to a stately chapel dedicated to the Creator of All Things, there is a walled pit, filled with water, under which stands an enormous tortoise. From it rises a tree of brass, the seat of a fourarmed figure.

The tortoise is also used in combination with the crane as shown in the candlestick of the accompanying illustrations; but owing to the wealth of legend pertaining to this relationship, it will be taken up in the next chapter.

WHAT IS THERE THAT HEAVEN CAN BESTOW SAVE THAT WHICH VIRTUE CAN OBTAIN? WHERE IS THE EFFICACY OF SPIRITUAL BEINGS BEYOND THAT WITH WHICH MAN HAS ENDOWED THEM? THE DIVINING-PLANT IS BUT A DEAD STALK; THE TORTOISE-SHELL A DRY BONE. THEY ARE BUT MATTER LIKE OURSELVES. AND MAN, THE DIVINEST OF ALL THINGS, WHY DOES HE NOT SEEK WISDOM FROM WITHIN, RATHER THAN FROM THESE GROSSER STUFFS?

BESIDES,... WHY NOT REFLECT UPON THE PAST, THAT PAST WHICH GAVE BIRTH TO THIS PRESENT? YOUR CRACKED ROOF AND CRUMBLING WALLS OF TO-DAY ARE BUT THE COMPLEMENT OF YESTERDAY'S LOFTY TOWERS AND SPACIOUS HALLS. THE STRAGGLING BRAMBLE IS BUT THE COMPLEMENT OF THE SHAPELY GARDEN TREE. THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CICADA ARE BUT THE COMPLEMENT OF ORGANS AND FLUTES; THE WILL-O'-THE-WISP AND FIREFLY, OF GILDED LAMPS AND PAINTED CANDLES. YOUR ENDIVE AND WATERCRESSSES ARE BUT THE COMPLEMENT OF THE ELEPHANT-SINEWS AND CAMEL'S HUMP OF DAYS BY-GONE; THE MAPLE-LEAF AND THE RUSH, OF YOUR ONCE RICH ROBES AND FINE ATTIRE. DO NOT REPINE THAT THOSE WHO HAD NOT SUCH LUXURIES THEN ENJOY THEM NOW. DO NOT BE DISSATISFIED THAT YOU WHO ENJOYED THEM THEN HAVE THEM NOW NO MORE. IN THE SPACE OF A DAY AND NIGHT, THE FLOWER BLOOMS AND DIES. BETWEEN SPRING AND AUTUMN, THINGS PERISH AND ARE RENEWED. BENEATH THE ROARING CASCADE A DEEP POOL IS FOUND: DARK VALLEYS LIE AT THE FOOT OF HIGH HILLS. THESE THINGS YOU KNOW: WHAT MORE CAN DIVINATION TEACH YOU?

LIU CHI, A.D. 1241–1293

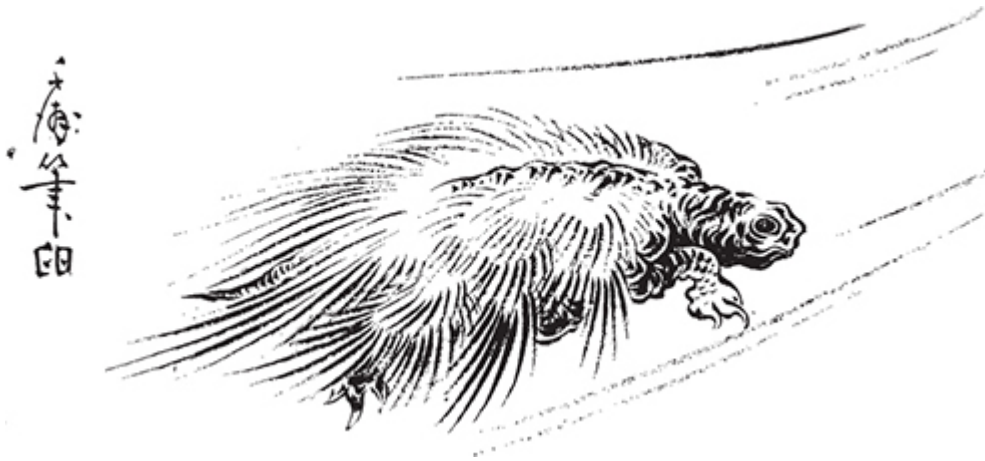
Giles Translation.

## CHAPTER VII

# THE TORTOISE

(Continued)

*Augustly you plough the seas  
Trailing your verdant mantle,  
Humbly you muse on the lotus leaf  
Displaying your radiant shield.  
Why, through the centuries, attain divinity  
If but to become a sacrifice to geomancy?*



From a painting by Chiura

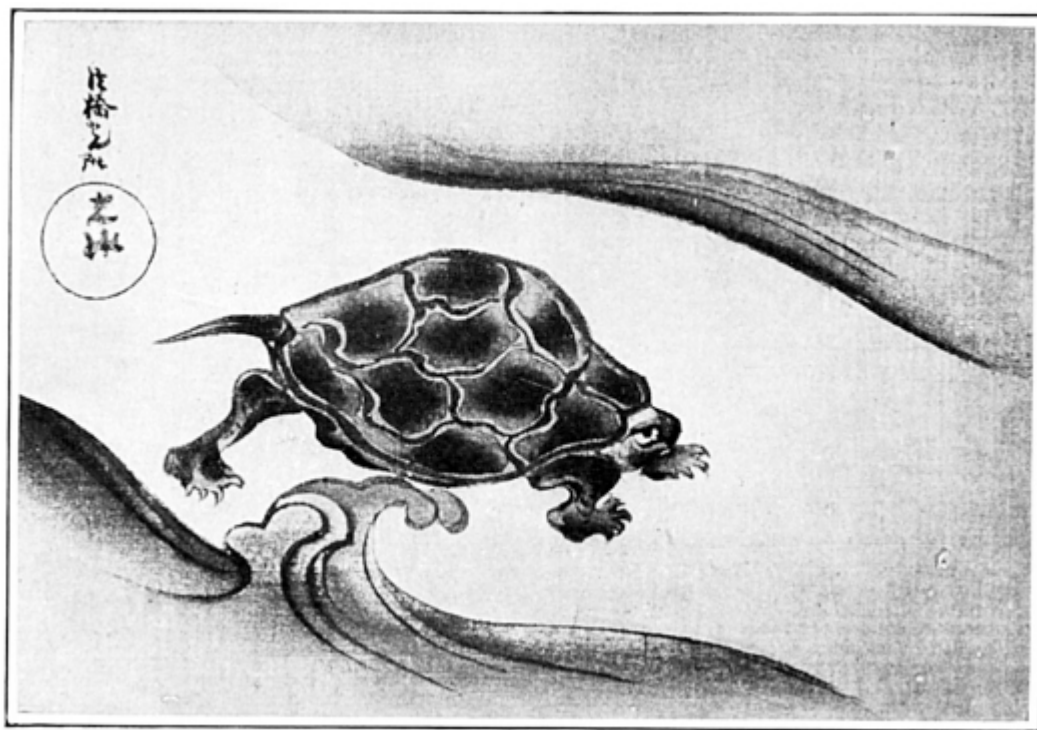
THE genus *Chelonia*, which is found in most parts of the earth except the colder regions, includes the tortoise and the turtle. The former lives on land and in fresh water, while the latter is strictly a marine creature. The tortoise ranges in size from the terrapin, which grows a shell seven inches long, to the huge creature of the Galapagos Islands off the coast of Ecuador, the shell of which measures as much as five feet in length. These latter are said to be the descendants of still larger tortoises and the direct survivors of the same families of prehistoric monsters to which belong the giant wingless birds. The remains of such a tortoise were found with those of other extinct animals in the Miocene formations of the Sivalik range lying at the base of the Himalayas. It measured eighteen feet in length and seven feet in width.

Quite the reverse of this are the descriptions in Chinese records of a diminutive tortoise which never exceeds two inches in length. It is known as the *ch'ien-kuei*, "cash-coin tortoise." The Japanese, also, have not only this small variety but likewise a huge turtle, the *yasawa*, found off the Kazusa coast, specimens of which have measured as much as seven feet.

All the *Chelonia* are oviparous and most of them bury their eggs in beaches and sand-banks. Immediately following their hatching, the young dig their way out and crawl to some near-by marsh, where they burrow in the mud for a season. They develop very slowly and are long-lived, some instances of recorded longevity being as great as three hundred and fifty years—the age being approximated by the ridges of the shell. Professor Agassiz believed that the tortoise was so protected in its organism that it could continue its life indefinitely.

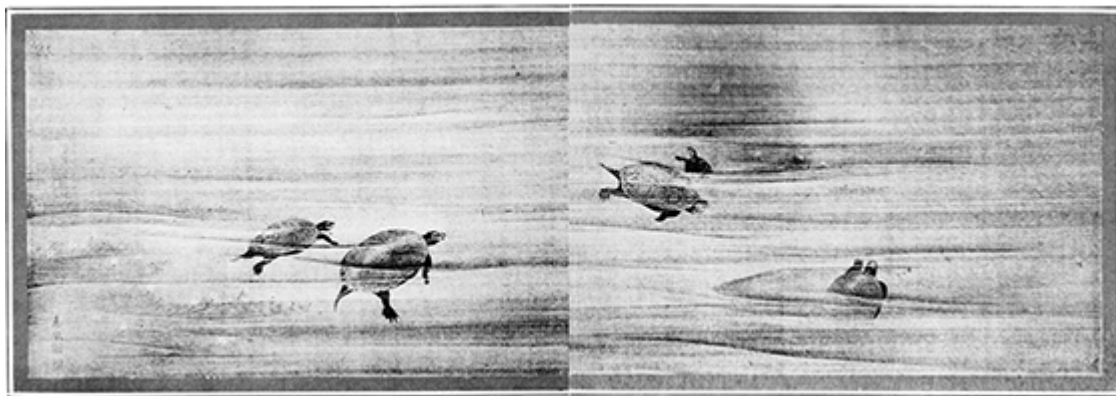
Some species are herbivorous but the majority are carnivorous, and in addition to its shell—consisting of the carapace, the upper convex shield, and the plastron, the lower flattened part, enclosing the trunk and into which the head, limbs, and tail may be withdrawn at any signal of danger—it possesses a toothless jaw, sheathed in a horny beak which snaps when it seizes its prey.

The tortoise displays considerable intelligence and is capable of being trained to perform many tricks, such as marching in many directions, following the order to advance, to stop, to retreat, to stand on its hind legs, to climb over each other or on top of each other, to form a *pagoda*.



From a painting by Kōrin

The ancient writings of the Chinese describe many varieties of this tribe, mostly legendary and fabulous. For example, one reputed to live in the river Shên I of the Niu Yang, known as the *shuen*, is of a dark blue colour, has a bird's head, a snake's tail, and croaks like the sighing of the trees.



From a painting by Ōkyo. In the Flow of the Tide

Another called *fên*, a native of the Ta Fei mountain, was said to be three-legged; while one, a divine tortoise, was like jade with golden spots, amidst which shone two circles resembling the sun



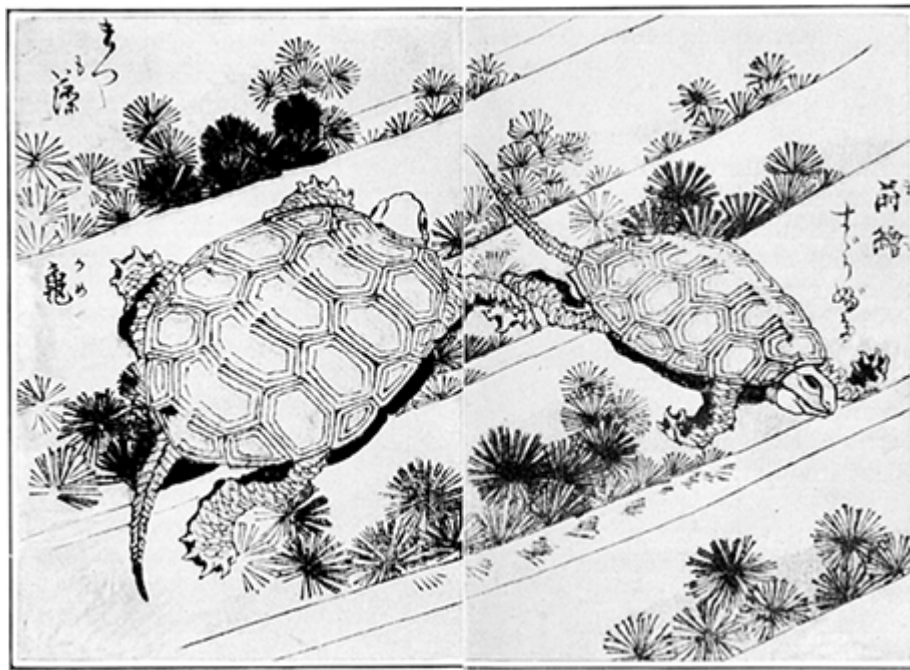
and moon. It lived a thousand years, and every hundred years it successively changed from one to the other of the five divine colours.

The earliest representation of the tortoise occurs in roughly wrought bone amulets. These have been found in some quantity in northern Honan province near the traditional site of one of the capitals of the Shang dynasty which belonged to the proto-historic period, antedating the ninth century B.C. It is known, both from tradition and from discovery of actual remains, that the shell of the tortoise was used about this same period for divination; and it is thought that the dome-like form of the shell of the creature suggested the vault of the sky, which at that time appears to have been the principal object of worship. According to the CHOU LI, a ritual of the Chou dynasty dating from the third or fourth century B.C., as many as six varieties were used in divination, and tortoise-catchers formed a recognized class of State employees.



From a drawing by Hokusai. Writing the Character *Fuku*

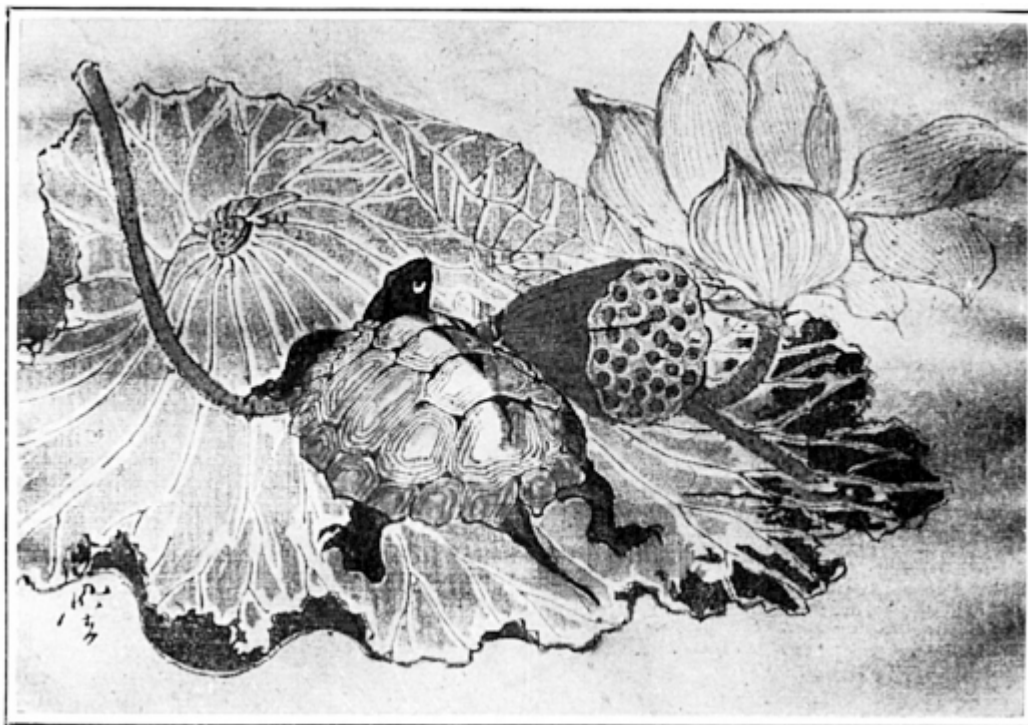
Again, an ancient classic of the Han dynasty (206 B.C.–220 A.D.) treats of the rules, regulations, and secrets of magic which are derived from the markings of the tortoise shell; hence, for centuries, this creature has been consulted as an oracle and used by conjurers, fortune-tellers, and geomancers of *Fêng-shui*.



From a woodcut by Hokusai

From the legendary days when the geometric figures on the shell of the tortoise were made the basis of the characters of the Chinese written language, this animal has been credited with displaying various diagrams. For example, there is a legend purporting that in the Shun kingdom there once appeared four tortoises, marching abreast, which had depicted on their backs respectively the characters: *Wang*, King; *Chih*, Rule; *Ta*, Great; and *Chi*, Luck.

The Japanese, by whom the tortoise is known as *kame*, have similar traditions. They say this reptile has inscribed on its back the *Roku-jō*, Six Cardinal Virtues, namely: *Chi*, Wisdom; *Yü*, Friendship; *Ci*, Fidelity; *Jin*, Charity; *Shin*, Sincerity; and *Kang*, Contemplation. For this reason the appellation *Zō Roku*, Carrying Six, is often applied to a deity and frequently used for a boy's name.



From a painting by Kyōsai

Divination by means of the tortoise shell was also practised according to Chinese methods which had been introduced throughout Korea as early as the sixth century. According to an old book this art of magic was performed by one who had fasted for seven days, after which, in solitude in the *uraba*, “divination plot,” he recited the *Kami-oroshi*, a formula supplicating the deity to come down to earth. Following this he set on fire a short stick of *hahaka* wood which, when sufficiently burnt to a charcoal point, he used to prick the shell, producing black lines, from which the divination was made. Then to conclude the ceremony he recited the *Kami-agara*, another formula notifying the deity to make his ascent.

At Kashima a form of tortoise shell divination is practised in the selection of a priestess. For this, two maidens present themselves, and after they have performed rites for a hundred days, their names are written on two tortoise shells. These are roasted through an entire day, and the one which is able to withstand the fire uninjured—while the other has burned to ashes—proclaims the name of the successful candidate.

The tortoise has not only been highly esteemed but also held sacred. As stated in the preceding chapter, it was regarded as the Base of the Beginning of Things; hence it became the symbol of support, and as such it figures in many a legend. One known as the *Kuei Ching*, “Tortoise Wall,” relates that in the Chin dynasty the Emperor ordered a wall built, but there were not sufficient stones to lay a secure foundation, and the builders were in despair until a wise and virtuous tortoise, seeing their dilemma, volunteered to sacrifice its life by burying itself in the ground and permitting the wall to be erected upon its back. Another tells of a scholar who was so poor that his only chair had but three legs until a kindly tortoise lent its back to take the place of the missing one.



From a drawing by Hokusai. Creating the Mystic *Tama*

In Japan the idea of support takes a more dignified form. It is found in connection with the sacred mountain *Hōraizan*—the Abode of the Immortals—the same that is known in India as *Sumêru*, and in China as Mount *Kw'en Lun* or *Shou Shan*—the Taoist Paradise. This mountain is thought to rest on the back of a great tortoise, an idea which has become a very popular theme of painters, particularly those of the Ukiyo-ye school. Another example portraying this idea occurs in the *San Gyoku no Kame*, shown in an accompanying illustration by Hokusai. Here the tortoise supports a great rock bearing aloft three of the Sacred Jewels of Omnipotence, which are employed to control the ebb and flow of the tides.

The association of the *kame* and the *tama* is also seen in the illustrations by Hokusai, where the tortoise—reputed to live by mere inhalation of air, and not requiring food—is shown breathing forth a spiral vapour from which emanate the mystic jewels, or the character *fuku*, “good luck.”

Again as with the Chinese, the tortoise is a symbol of longevity, having the potentiality of an age of ten thousand years, a period through which it becomes divine and acquires not only the qualities of spiritual poise and power, but also a long, feathery, fan-like tail. From the latter it has derived the additional name of *mino-game*, because this graceful appendage strongly resembles a *mino*, “peasant’s raincoat.”



From a coloured woodcut by Utamaro. Benten's Wedding

The idea of longevity, it is claimed, originally was suggested by the shelly covering of the animal, which ever offered a protection against the onslaught of any foe, thus permitting it to live on an uninterrupted existence.



From a *surimono* by Shinsai. The Musing *Mino*-game

To substantiate the claim to great age, there are not only anecdotes but official records. One states that a tortoise was caught which had on its back an inscription dating back two hundred and fifty years. How old it was when freed was not stated. Inscribing dates as well as religious texts on the backs of these animals and then freeing them has been a long-established custom in Buddhist countries. This was done to obtain spiritual merit and known as the Let Live Act,” for the taking of life in any form was regarded as most sinful.



From a coloured woodcut by Yeisen. The Seven Gods of Happiness

In Japanese mythology the tortoise is the attribute of Kōmpira, the special deity of sea-faring men. Hence, if a devout fisherman catches a tortoise, he writes on its shell “Attendant of Kōmpira,” and giving it a drink of *saké*—for the little creature is said to be very fond of intoxicants—he returns it to the sea. This may account for the use of the tortoise as a decoration in the *saké* cup used during the marriage ceremony. The freeing of the tortoise—known as *Hōjō-ye*—generally occurs on the temple grounds, where, for the accommodation of the devout, vendors display the *hanashi-game*, “tortoises to be set free,” dangling from strings or helplessly squirming on the tops of poles. Miniature lakes or ponds are ready to receive the little prisoners, which after being liberated are regarded as sacred and are permitted to live on indefinitely. Feeding these favoured creatures, which is considered another opportunity to acquire merit, is likewise a source of great sport. For the food—procured from the same vendor, consisting of pink rice balls resembling eggs—is of so light a substance, that when tossed into the water, and attacked by the struggling multitude of the shelly tribe, it bounds about for a long time before it is seized, crushed and eaten.





From a woodcut by Kansī. *Tsuru to Kame*

The association of the tortoise and the serpent, given in the preceding article—known to the Chinese as the *Kuei Shê*—is occasionally found in Japan and called *Gembu*. A notable instance occurred when, during the celebration at the temple of Taigyokuden, or Heian Jingu, Kyōto prefecture, commemorating the eleventh centenary of the founding of Kyōto by the Emperor Kwammu (A.D. 794), four flags were flown from the four corners of the sacred edifice, displaying the Black Warrior, or Tortoise and Serpent; the Blue Dragon; the Red Bird; and the White Tiger, representing respectively the Four Kings to be worshipped: Bishamon of the North, Jikoku of the East, Zōchō of the South, and Kōmoku of the West.



From a *surimono* by Toyohiro. Urashima Tarō

That the tortoise is related to Benten or Benzai-ten—who is not only the goddess of literary talents, and of love, but also a river deity—is proved by the decorations on the beautiful bronze *torii* at the temple dedicated in her honour at Enoshima, where she is the presiding divinity. The design consists of a bas-relief of a very beautiful composition of tortoises struggling in the flow and ebb of the waves. Then, again, on the ceiling of this temple there is a singular painting of this animal, as well as a large stone monument in the adjoining garden.

The relationship of the tortoise to Benten, who is a member of the *Shichi-fukujin*, “Seven Gods of Happiness,” is due to her having been originally a river deity, as which she had both the dragon and the serpent as attributes. In fact, she is regarded by some to be half dragon, and by others half serpent; but, in any event, she always wears a little white snake in her headdress.

The use of the tortoise as a decorative motive on stands supporting musical instruments may also be traceable to Benten, since she presides over the musical arts. However, the connection between the tortoise and music is analogous to that of the tortoise and time, both being associated with the Northern Constellation, Ursa Major, which is thought to be the bringer-forth of time, and therefore the sources from which all melodies emanate. Hence, since the tortoise is the symbol of this constellation, it is used not only with musical instruments but with time-pieces; which accounts for its ancient association with the sundial.

Other personages associated with the tortoise are the two *sennin*, Huang An (Jap. Koan) and Lu Ao (Jap. Rōko), although some authorities claim these two are identical, since both are represented as

nude or semi-nude and ride huge tortoises. Among the Indian deities who sometimes use this animal as a support are the water gods, Sui-ten, Varuna, and Laksmi.

The tortoise is also combined with the crane, which is another Taoist symbol of longevity—the crane being said to live a thousand years and the tortoise ten thousand; hence the expression: *Kuei no tung chung*, “May you live as long as the tortoise and the crane.”

This combination is common to all the arts, and particularly used for candlesticks—examples of which are given in the preceding chapter. The placing of the crane upon the back of the tortoise is said to have come from Annam, where, in the temples, figures of this kind are placed on both sides of the altar. Originally Taoistic, it was appropriated by the Buddhists, who explain the association of the two creatures by the following legend:



From a woodcut by Hokusai. *San Oyohu no Kame*

A festival was held for *Sākya*, and everyone was expected to bring a lighted candle. One old woman was so poor that she was obliged to sell her hair to buy one. Then a storm arose, and blew out all the candles but hers. Buddha himself was in darkness, waiting for his boat to cross the river, when suddenly a crane flew down, seized the candle from the old woman and lit upon the back of a tortoise which miraculously appeared on the waters; then, together, the crane carried by the tortoise, they illuminated the path for the master to cross.

One of the most popular legends of Japan, in which the tortoise and crane figure prominently, is that of Urashima Tarō, the Japanese Rip Van Winkle, shown in a given illustration of a *surimono* by

Toyohiro. This narrative, which for centuries has been told and retold, and depicted in every form of art expression, has been the means of inculcating not only the lessons of filial piety and kindness to animals, but those of the consequences of yielding to temptation. Urashima was a fisher-boy of Ejima, who in so remote a time as the seventh century caught a tortoise and gently returned it to the waters. On the following day he saw a beautiful maiden in a small boat, being tossed helplessly about by a rough sea. When he went to her rescue, she informed him that her friends had perished in the storm. Seeing her plight he undertook to escort her to her home. For several days they journeyed, and finally, to his surprise, arrived at what proved to be the Dragon Palace at the bottom of the sea. There he learned that his companion was none other than the Princess Otohime, daughter of Ryūjin, the Dragon King, and so grateful was the king for his daughter's rescue that he gave her to Urashima for his wife.

Wonderful were the festivities and gorgeous the splendours of this wedding, to which came all the creatures of the deep, arrayed in all their fine raiment. Urashima's happiness was complete. So alluring was the life of this mystic realm that he became forgetful of the world beyond, and not until three years had passed did he realize how undutiful he had been to his parents. Then, fearing that they would grieve for him as dead, he decided to make them a visit, and so informed his wife. She, however, was loath to let him go, but being unable to dissuade him, revealed to him the fact that she was not a mortal but the tortoise which he had so mercifully freed; and in order that he might return to her, she gave to him a token of her love, consisting of a small box, which he was ever to carry, but under no circumstances to open if he ever expected to return to her.

In due time he reached his native land, but all seemed strange. He was unable to find either his home or any familiar place. Then seeing a very old man at the gate of the village cemetery, he questioned him concerning the Urashima family, and was told there was none, but that three hundred years before there had been such an one. There-upon he led Urashima to the place where the family had been buried, pointing out to him a tombstone upon which his own name was inscribed.

Dazed at these revelations, and thinking that the box he carried might unravel the mystery, he disobeyed the injunctions of his wife and opened it. Thereupon there issued a purple vapour, which enveloped him, and he saw, as in a vision, that what he thought had been three years was in reality three hundred years, and almost immediately his youthful form took on the appearance of a decrepit old man, which in turn as rapidly became transformed into a crane. Then simultaneously a tortoise, which proved to be his wife, appeared on the shore, and together these two—the crane spreading its wings and soaring into the sky, and the tortoise trailing its golden tail following in the waters beneath—journeyed to Hōraizan to live in this Mountain of the Immortals a perpetual existence of uninterrupted bliss.

This combination of the tortoise and crane—known in Japan as *Tsuru to Kame*—is a common theme of artists, particularly for congratulatory messages appearing in *surimono* form. It is also popular with publishers, who use it on the last page of a book to enclose the name of the firm. Such is the illustration by Kansi, in which the tortoise in human fashion is writing the characters *Sōshiclō zō han*, signifying “The block-printing of Sōshidō.”

The tortoise and crane ever figure in the paraphernalia of the Japanese wedding ceremony. In the accompanying illustration of Utamaro's humorous composition entitled “Benten's Wedding,” participated in by the other six of Seven Gods of Happiness, the *hōrai* or wedding stand appears in the background supporting the *Shō-chiku-bai*, “The pine, bamboo and plum,” also known as the Three Happy Plants, under which the tortoise and crane are shown.

These two creatures are also the attributes of Fukurokujiu, the god of longevity and one of the Seven Gods of Happiness. Hence, in all representations of the group, as in the accompanying illustration of a woodcut by Yeisen, the crane is shown flying against the sun, while the tortoise swims along the side of the *Takarabune*, “treasure ship.”

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE LION

*The lion is indeed a strange animal. It came from the western country. In appearance it seems ferocious and very powerful. Of what value is it in time of peace? Why accept tributes of wild beasts to consume food which is needed by the people? Only when carved from stone and expressing exalted ideals does it serve the gods. Then it not only delights the eyes with its beauty, but it also protects us against demons even a thousand miles away.*

YEN SUI HOU, T'ang dynasty.



From a painting by Kakunen.

THE mythical lion, the *shih-tzū*, also called *wên-hu*, is familiarly known by its sculptural images, which figure very conspicuously in pairs in front of Imperial gates and palaces, of temples, shrines and the statues of divinities, as well as of the graves of the mighty, where it ever performs the duty of guardian against every form of evil. It appears to have been unknown before the advent of Buddhism, which occurred in the fourth century A.D., at which time the priest Fā-hien, after a pilgrimage to India and Ceylon, introduced the worship of Avalokiteśvara (Chi. Kuan-yin, Jap. Kwannon) and Mañjuśrī (Chi. Wên-shū, Jap. Monju) the two of the *Bodhisattva* of the Buddhist triad.

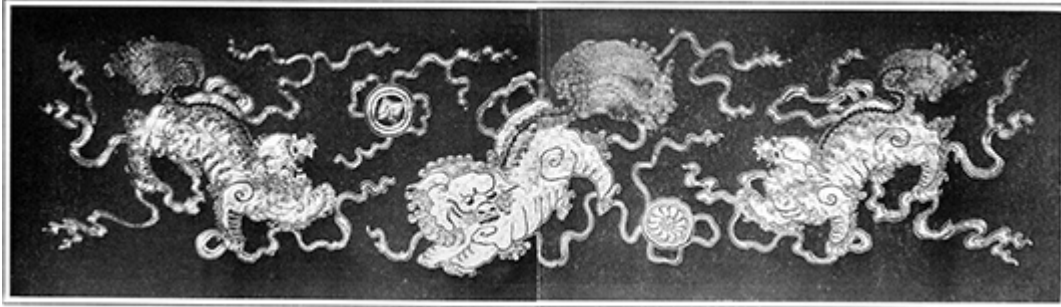
The lion has always been most closely related to Buddha, for which reason it became his emblem. He was known as Sākya-sinha, "Lion of the Sākya tribe," hence all representations of him show the lion body—the shoulders broad and the body made lithe—to express the spiritual strength and endurance of the Master, qualities which he derived from the ten incarnations as the King of Beasts. His attitudes were designated as the Lion Postures, his doctrine as the Lion's Law, his sermons as the Lion's Roar; and, at times, the lion is used as a support for his lotus throne.

It was, however, in the particular cult of Mañjuśrī that the lion figures still more prominently, being the *vāhan* or vehicle of the deity—the animal upon which he sits. This *Bodhisattva* is held to be the apotheosis of transcendental wisdom. He was originally a monk, one of the eighteen disciples of Sākya-muni, but later became a metaphysical creation whose chief function was the dispelling of ignorance. He was usually addressed in prayers as the Enlightener of the World, and is styled the Lamp of Wisdom and Supernatural Power. His name, Mañjuśrī, interpreted means Charming Splendour and the Enchanter. Of his origin it is stated that Buddha caused a ray of light to burst from his own forehead and pierce a *jambu* tree. Therefrom sprung a lotus, out of the centre of which



emerged this prince of sages, Ārya Mañjuśrī. His colour was golden, in his right hand he brandished the mystic sword of wisdom, and in his left he held a lotus upon which reposed a book containing the sacred scriptures. He was extraordinarily beautiful and resplendent in the many ornaments that covered his person, and, being born with-out father and mother, he was free from the pollution of humanity, consequently the very embodiment of purity.

In orthodox Buddhism he is ordinarily represented mounted on a lion, which not only symbolizes his own qualities of wisdom, but those of boldness, bravery, and an eager, advancing spirit. He is variously shown carrying the *khadga*, “sword of enlightenment”; the PRAJNĀPĀRAMITĀ, “A Treatise on Transcendental Wisdom,” held separately or supported by the *Utpala*, “blue lotus,” and surmounted by the *cintāmani*, “flaming pearl.”



From a Chinese embroidery in gold thread. Mythical Lions with their Attributes



From a Japanese stencil. Lion Manes and Peonies

Like the other Buddhist deities, he is given from one to three or even more heads, and from two to innumerable arms. He also appears in all the different standing and sitting positions, generally supported by the lotus, while his lion likewise is shod by the same sacred blossom.

In China the cult of Mañjuśrī is known as *Wên Shu Shi Li*. It was very popular with both the Chinese and the Monguls, doubtless due to the belief that Sâkya-muni originally requested Mañjuśrī to convert the Chinese. This he did by establishing the monastery of Wu-t'ai Shan in the Shansi province, northern China, where it is said: "He caused the Wheel of the Law to revolve incessantly on the Five Mountains of the Five Colours, crowned by the Five Various Shaped Pagodas."

An ancient book refers to a god called Tai Yi Tien Tsun, who appears to be identical with Wên-shu, for he is described as "sitting on a fire-coloured lotus flower, under which is a fire-coloured lion having nine heads. From the mouth of each head issue blue flames forming a frame of nine different colours around the god, and on the frame appear many different symbolic weapons."

In the portrayal of Mañjuśrī in both China and Japan, he not only holds the attributes already described, but also the sacred sceptre—known in China as the *jū-i* and in Japan as the *nyo-i*—which interpreted means "as you like it," and symbolizes the power of the faith.

In Japan, as Monju *Bosatsu*, this deity is represented as a young prince of mediæval times, with long hair and flowing robes which, to the modern student, give him quite a feminine appearance.

The given illustrations by Tanyū, Shotetsu, and Bunchō limit his attributes to the sacred writings, the sceptre, and the sword; but the lotus is not given in any form. In one of the paintings by Tanyū, the lion is shown in an attitude of adoration listening to the words of Truth which are being read; while in that of Mizunoya Tennō—another impersonation of Monju *Bosatsu*—the lion has his mouth open uttering the significant "*Aum*" from which the alphabet, "the seed of the universe," was produced. In this composition by Bunchō, the lion is painted blue, his mane and tail green, the deity red, and the background of the composition gold.



From a Chinese porcelain figure





From a Chinese embroidery

The form in which the lion was first used is not, therefore, a Chinese creation, but an importation originally from East India, and later modified successively by the countries through which it passed. Its name, *shih-tzŭ*, is quite suggestive of Persian contact, while again many of its characteristics are strongly Tibetan.



From a Japanese stencil. Lion Manes and Peonies

It was purely a mythological creature, a mere device for the inculcation of the tenets of a particular doctrine, and not a reproduction of the image of a natural animal. The real lion is not indigenous to the country, and has never been seen except when brought there, as described in the following legend by Chang Chih-fu of the Ming dynasty: "During a successful reign not only is all China united, but all tribes are subjugated as well. Precious things and wonderful creatures are paid as tribute from many countries. Among these, the lion is brought from the western boundary so far distant that it took an entire year to reach our capital. This creature, which is known as the King of Beasts, was a great curiosity to the people, many of whom enjoyed seeing it, while others were distressed by it. Of what value is a lion which requires food needed by the people? Cows, sheep, and horses are useful, but the lion is destructive. A former ruler entertained his people with fighting animals, but upon one of these occasions he was wounded by a tiger, and that ended these contests. If any emperor really desires to see wonderful animals let him prepare a successful reign, and the glorious *Fêng-huang* and the divine *Ch'i-lin* will come and greet the people."

Again, the TAN YÜAN states that in the Sung dynasty there were many lions presented by foreign countries which were kept for the Imperial gardens. But these creatures required so much food—each fifteen pounds of meat daily—that their keep was a matter of concern to the ruler. He finally refused to accept any more gifts of lions, saying that he could easily maintain an official of the middle rank with what the animals cost him. Since that time no lions have been sent from foreign nations.

Another legend relates that in a province called Ta Shih in the west of Persia, a merchant went into the country. There he met a lion, from whom he learned that in the western mountains there were three caves. These contained a book of great wisdom and some weapons which, if possessed and used, would enable anyone to become a king. The merchant acted upon the advice of the lion. He found the caves and obtained the treasures. He was, however, obliged to subdue the tribes of that region, which

the books and the weapons enabled him to do; and in time he became their monarch. This merchant is supposed to have been Mohammed, and the book he found in the caves the Koran.

A typical Chinese narrative pertaining to the lion was written by Chang Chih-ho of the T'ang dynasty as follows:



From a Chinese porcelain figure

“From the eastern country came the bird, *Yü Tsu*, and from the western the lion, *Chun Ni*. They met in the central country, which was China. *Yü Tsu* boasted being king of all birds, claiming that when he flies all birds follow him, when he sings all birds join in the song, and when he is angry all birds are frightened and remain silent. To this *Chun Ni* replied that he was the king of animals; that he received his power to govern the entire animal kingdom from heaven; that where he walks all animals escort him, and where he arrives all animals receive him; that he can choose any animal for his food and can order any animal to fight others for his protection.



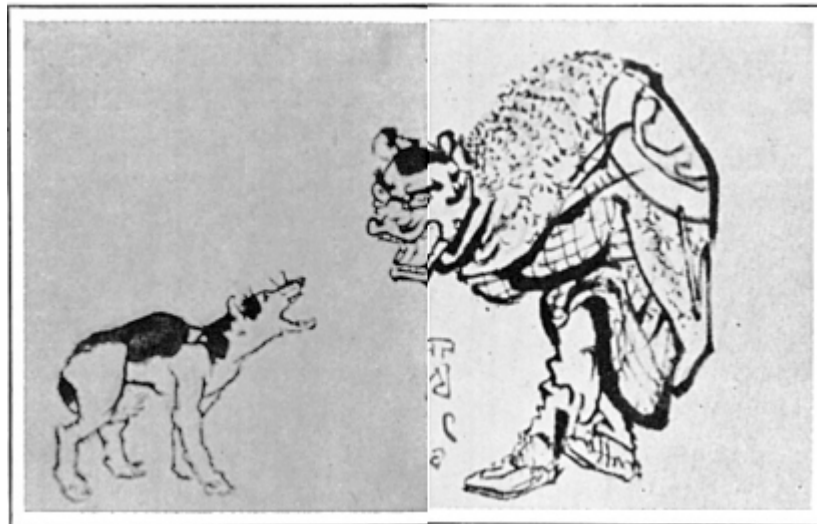
From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige. *Kara-shishi* Over the Precipice

“Both these creatures tried to display their respective powers, but while they were contending, a man chanced by, and hearing the discussion interrupted it by saying: ‘This is the central kingdom, the abiding-place of man, not of birds and beasts. You had both better return to your own domains before he who is more powerful than either of you may be called upon to exercise his powers, for he does not wish his quiet and peace disturbed by such as you.’”



From a screen-painting attributed to Kitao Shigemasa. The Lion Dance

While the Chinese did not originate the mythical lion, it would appear that they had modified the importation to conform to their own *ch'i-lin*, for in many instances it has taken unto itself the dorsal spine and the flaming tentacles of its prototype. Again, its name, *wên-hu*, meaning “civilization tiger,” would indicate that it had taken on some of the characteristics of this beast; for the latter, in addition to being a native of the Flowery Kingdom, was not only regarded as the ruler of all the furred tribes, but also played an important part in *Fênq-shui*. But the most important variance from the original was its remodelling in imitation of the Pekinese toy-dog which was thought to resemble a lion, if not in size, at least in its colour and flowing locks. That this grotesque creature began as a lion but ultimately became a dog is most evident, for in all of its early portrayals, as in India, Java, and Cambodia, it is as distinctly leonine as it is canine in China.



From a painting by Hokusai. A caricature of *Ashimai*



From a woodcut by Morikuni

The principal attribute of this chimera is its *chu*, a globular fleshy organ generated through great longevity, which the creature expels and recalls at will. It is a thing of mysterious import often referred to as the Jewel of Omnipotence—in fact the very source of the animal's life, which, if lost, would cause it to perish. It is in all probability a survival of sun worship, which at a very remote time came to the Far East from Mesopotamian countries, where the lion and the sun were associated in the zodiac. For it was observed that when the sun was in the house of Leo it manifested its greatest force, resembling the fiery nature of the fierce monarch of the forest.

In Egypt there was a distinct lion and sun cult, practised as early as dynastic times. Its chief centre was Leontopolis, "The Lion City," where lions were considered sacred and kept in temples. During the eighteenth dynasty, Amenhotep III was called the Lion of Kings, and the lion was used as the emblem of royal courage.

The lion symbolized guardianship and protection, each as the part played by the ancient lion-god, Aker, who guarded the gate of the dawn through which the sun passed each morning. He is depicted as a double-headed lion, whose body was the earth, and whose mouths were the gates of entrance and exit through a dark tunnel—one mouth being believed to belch forth the luminary and the other to swallow it daily. He is usually distinguished by bearing the sun in the form of a scarab on his back.

A later idea substituted two lions, Lef and Dua, the gods of "Yesterday" and "To-morrow," to guard the entrance and exit of this passage.





From a painting by Tanyū. Monju *Bosatsu* Shown as a Young Prince

From this belief was derived the practice of placing statues of lions at the doors of palaces and tombs as guardians of both the living and the dead against all evil.

These statues were originally female, then they combined the characteristics of both the male and the female, and finally were given the head of men, becoming what are familiarly known as “sphinxes.” The most famous of these, that of Gizeh, symbolizes the Sun-god, Ra, and consists of a recumbent body of a lion with a man’s head. It faces the rising sun and protects the dead that lie in the surrounding tombs.

The lion was also associated with water, for it is at the time of the inundation of the Nile that the sun is in the house of Leo; hence lion-heads with gaping mouths were used for waterspouts.

Not only in Egypt, but in all countries where sun-worship prevailed, archaeologists find the association of the lion and the sun. In Persia, the sun-god, Mithra, the genius of celestial light who ultimately became the sun itself, is shown as a lion-headed divinity entwined six times by a serpent to typify the tortuous course of the sun through the ecliptic. He also holds the globe of power, the sun, which is regarded as the governor of the universe and the controller of the planets.



From a woodcut by Morikuni

From very remote times sun myths and sun symbols have persisted, migrating from country to country. Yet notwithstanding that they have become changed in their transit, the ancient form, a realistic lion with a front paw on the sun, still exists in the Lion of St. Mark's at Venice. This royal beast guarding the sun-ball has undoubtedly become the pattern of the prevailing lion of Europe which guards national and religious edifices after the manner of ancient Egypt, Babylonia, and Assyria. The naturalistic lion of the Nile and the Euphrates, however, in its migrations to Cathay was later successively transformed by Taoists and Buddhists until it no longer resembled the real creature but became a chimera, while the sun-ball, like-wise evolved into the oriental *chu*, became endowed with the qualities of the pearl of the dragon. But, regardless of these modifications, it has ever retained its power to protect from evil everything in front of which it was placed on guard; a fact which adds to the claim of the diffusion of civilization from Egypt, for there can be no question whatever that the Egyptian lion and ball long antedated the Chinese *shih-tzū*.



From a painting by Tanyū. Monju *Bosatsu*



From a painting by Hoitsu



From a painting by Bunchō. Mizunoya Tennō

The Chinese say that the lion is in charge of the universe and that, like the dragon, when it breathes it creates clouds which bring the rain; and that it holds the sun by the power of its paw—hence the mystic ball, the *chu*, under its foot. This ball, like the pearl of the dragon, is claimed not only to be a beautiful crystal sphere, but also to be possessed by a number of real animals, including serpents, reptiles, and tortoises.

In its sculptured form this attribute of the lion generally consists of a hollow ball with its shell intricately pierced with varying patterns of the coin or *cash* symbol and the peony motive, as in the accompanying illustration entitled “A Chinese Porcelain Figure.” In its graphic representations, however, especially when used for tapestries, brocades and embroideries, it assumes a flat disc-like shape enclosing either the *cash* device or the peony. It generally has the *ling fei*, “spirit flying,” streamers denoting its sacred character; and, while at times it appears under the foot of the lion, it usually is shown floating in space, as in the illustration of “A Chinese embroidery.”

In Japan the lion is likewise both canine and leonine, being known as the *Koma-inu*, “Korean dog,” and the *Kara-shishi*, “Chinese lion.” The earliest mention of it appears in the records following the conquest of Korea by the Empress Jingō (A.D. 201), after which event the king of Korea made the following promise:



From a woodcut by Hokusai

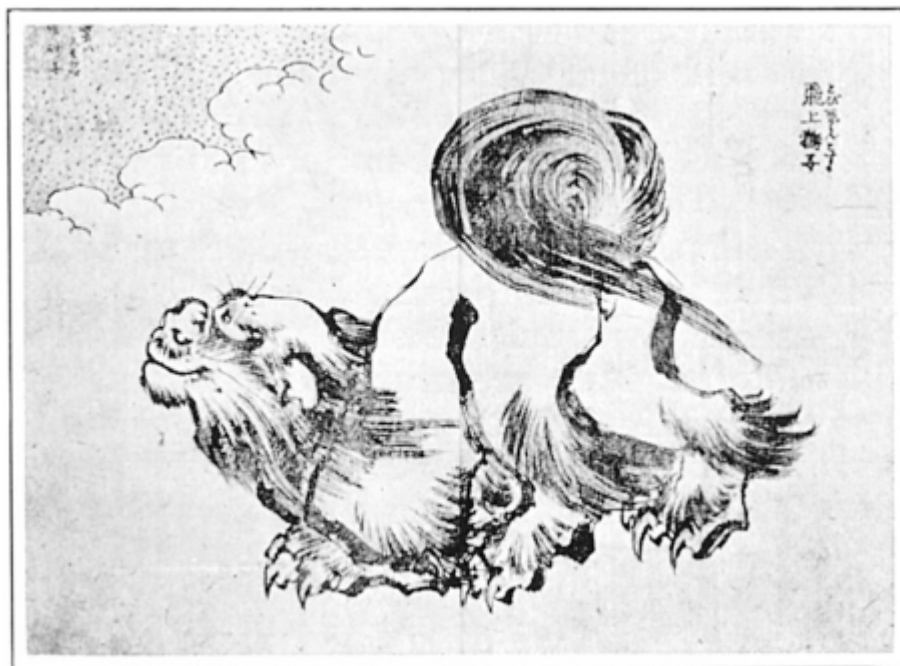
“I and my sons, my grandsons, and my great-grandsons will become your subjects and ever remain faithful as a dog. We shall always lend our support in protecting Japan from the invasion of the attacking barbarians and yearly shall send a national tribute to the Imperial family.” From this historic time the *Koma-inu* were placed in front of the Shintô shrines and the apartments of the Emperor and Empress.



From a painting by Shotetsu. Monju *Bosatsu*

Another version of the origin of these dogs is that, “anciently, two gods were sent from heaven by the Supreme Ruler to remain in the under-world and guard the Imperial palace and to protect the Imperial family. They were exhorted to be as faithful as dogs, and in compliance therewith they assumed canine forms.”

In Japan as in China, with the introduction of Buddhism and the adoption of the cult of Mañjuśrī, or Monju, the *Koma-inu*—a distinctly Shintō creature—was forced to share the honours with the deity’s attribute, the lion; and again, as in China, a toy dog, the small spaniel, was used to supply the characteristic face and curling locks of both its mane and tail, resulting in the popular *Kara-shishi*.



From a woodcut by Hokusai

From this time the entrances of all buildings of importance, ecclesiastical and secular, were under the protection of the male *Koma-inu* and the female *Kara-shishi*. The former—being distinguished by a single horn, open mouth, and front foot placed upon a highly decorated *chu*—occupied a position on the left; and the latter—hornless, with mouth closed and fondling its cub—the position on the right.

In this arrangement a new Buddhist significance has been attached to both, implying the Beginning and End of All Things. For the open mouth of *Koma-inu* is supposed to say “*Aum*,” which was derived from the first of the Sanskrit vowels, and the closed mouth of the *Kara-shishi*, “*um*,” or the last of these vowels. These sounds, upon which all the sacred books of Buddhism concentrate their teachings, symbolize “The Beginning and The Completion of all Faith and Salvation.” The *Koma-inu* and *Kara-shishi* are therefore regarded as the spiritual vehicles of the beginning and the end of religious worship.





From a painting by Meicho. The Arhat

While the above description of the two creatures, the Korean dog and the Chinese lion, is given by authorities of oriental literature, it does not always agree with their representations in art. The latter differ so extensively, varying according to the ideas of their respective designers, that they have become interchangeable, the *Kara-shishi* taking on the attributes of the *Koma-inu*, and vice versa.

As in China—where the *Shih-tzū* is shown both male and female, sometimes the male with the *chu* and the female with the cub, at other times each without either attribute; sometimes one having the single horn, then again both having it, or both being without it—so in Japan, the attributes of the *Komainu* and *Kara-shishi* become similarly exchanged. This confusion first occurred during the Tokugawa era at the time when the Shintō and Buddhist religions became interfused.

The *chu* which in Japan is known as the *Mari to Kara-shishi*, “Brocade Ball of the Lion,” is said to be hollow, and therefore symbolizes Emptiness. It is the emblem of the Pure Vacancy, which Mañjuśrī preached—a vacancy which involved the entire withdrawal of all thought from the world of sensation. “Let the mind do nothing; observe nothing; aim at nothing; hold fast to nothing,” was his injunction. “Would the mind receive wisdom it must first become empty,” was one of the tenets of his doctrine.

With the knowledge of the meaning of the *Mari to Kara-shishi*, its utilization in the form for a lantern—known as the *Kara-shishi dōrō*—seems most fitting, since its radiation typifies the illumination which results from the acquisition of the Light of Wisdom.

The *cash* and peony motives which decorate the Brocade Ball likewise have special significances. The former, which the Japanese call *shippō*, symbolizes the seven jewels: gold, silver, coral, crystal,

amber, agate, and pearl; while the latter derives its distinction from the following legend pertaining to Monju *Bosatsu*, which has been dramatized in the famous *No* opera, *Shakkyo*, "The Stone Bridge."

A priest, *Shakkyo*, while on a journey to Wu-t'ai-Shan in search of knowledge, was about to cross a stone bridge when a youth carrying fire-wood approached him and warned him not to proceed, as the country beyond was infested with lions which would devour him unless he was protected by spiritual power. As the priest was deliberating upon this information the place suddenly became fragrant and the air rang with beautiful music, while the youth revealed himself as Monju *Bosatsu*. Then simultaneously, a lion came from the forest and, circling about a growing peony flower, danced for the edification of the priest.

Thus have the lion and peony found expression in such subjects as that delineated by Morikuni in the given illustration of the *Kara-shishi* with the peony and the rocks upon which the flower grows. However, there is another version of this association which relates that the peony as the queen of flowers was regarded as a fitting companion of the lion, which was the king of animals, hence the combination.

There is also a traditional cat and peony subject frequently seen in painting which was derived from a well-known May-day poem by the celebrated poet Rihaku, wherein is described a garden scene in which the famous beauty Yokihi and the Emperor Genso amused themselves watching a pet cat chasing butterflies among the peonies.

The symbol of the peony in China, that of "richness and glory," has been perpetuated by the Japanese; hence *kakemono* of peonies generally have inscribed upon them the characters for Richness, Glory, and Eternal Spring.

An interesting application of the lion and peony motive occurs in the combination of the lion's mane with the blossom as shown in two reproductions of Japanese stencils, where the long, gracefully flowing locks of the king of animals are made to serve as *ling fei*, sacred streamers, to the queen of flowers.

A dance related to the *Kara-shishi* and performed during the New Year's festival is that of *Kapora Dai Kagura*, popularly known as *Shishimai*. Upon this occasion the animal, usually represented by two men covered with a cloth, one wearing a mask with a movable jaw, is borne about the streets dancing and prancing to the delight of the populace. Sometimes a single individual similarly arrayed does the dance, in which case it is known as *Ashimai*.

The same dance, called the *Shih-tzū Wu*, is performed in China. It consists of the gyrations of an immense artificial lion, which in an excited manner leaps about in an endeavour to seize a *chu* which, in tantalizing fashion, is dangled before him. This dance is quite a common feature in processions, and is also used upon occasions when contributions of a public nature are solicited. Then, the lion is made to dance along the streets, while a man precedes it with some kind of receptacle to receive the official coins.

In the screen-painting by Kitao Shigemasa, the scene of the *Shishimai* is enacted by a company of children; while in the painting of Hokusai, the *Ashimai* is caricatured by that prince of designs. Again, in the painting by Hoitsu, two dancing lions are made to represent the Chinese monad of the *Yang* and the *Yin* of the *Pa-kwa*—the circular enclosure of two comma-shaped forms of opposite values.

In the arts the *Koma-inu* may be seen on the tops of incense-burners, while the *Kara-shishi* is shown in combination with the regal peony and sacred ball. It is also depicted leaping a waterfall; perched upon a rock; combating a wind-storm; fighting or playing with its mate; or performing the offices of parent. A favourite theme is that of *Kara-shishi no Saka Otoshi*, "Lion Over the Precipice," shown in an accompanying illustration.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE LION

(Continued)

*This picture of a lion painted on a hall screen holds the spirit of its painter, Tan Wei. The eyes of the beast are large and round; its nose is short and stubby; its whiskers are long and stiff, and its tongue is firm and strong. It dances with its front feet and waves its tail. Although a ferocious beast it appears tame and gentle. Yet it is still a lion, and being so real and life-like, it will protect the house and drive away all demons.*

SU SHIH, *Sung dynasty.*



From a Japanese bronze

IN art, the lion is a popular motive in all countries where Buddhism prevails. It occupies an important place in architecture, where, in pairs, its sculptured form in the round is placed not only at the entrance of Imperial and sacred edifices, but may be seen in whole or in part affixed in places both on the exterior and interior of these buildings.

It is likewise conspicuous in bas-reliefs of stone and wood wherever flat surfaces offer opportunities for decoration, as shown in the illustration of the *Karamon* of Hongwanji, Kyōto.

In the lesser arts it is represented in bronze, brass, every kind of clay, wood, and like material as a mere object of beauty, although its shape is quite extensively used for incense burners, or for the knobs of their covers, and for the handles of vases.

It is a very common motive of decoration in tapestries, brocades, and embroideries, particularly of those used for temple furnishings and priestly vestments. It is also found in the gorgeous costumes of

the richly adorned coats and skirts of the Chinese as well as on the beautiful *kimonos* of Japan, which have found their way into the homes of the beauty-loving foreigners.

In painting—unlike its rival the tiger, which for centuries has been a popular theme for artists—it is rarely seen, except as the *vāhan* of some deity.

As the support of Monju *Bosatsu* or his impersonation as Mizunoya *Tennō*—examples of which are given in the preceding chapter—it is most familiar, although it serves other deities in the same manner. Among these are Dai-nichi Nyorai, the Kongo Kokuzō *Bosatsu*, and Bishamon—in addition to which are the Hindu divinities, Nara-sinha and Durgā; as well as several Egyptian gods.

Dai-nichi Nyorai (Sansk. Vairocana) is the supreme Buddha of the Shingon sect of Japanese Buddhism. He is believed to be the incarnation of the Great Sun, hence, the maker of the perfect brilliant light. And as the lion and the sun have ever been so closely related, this sun deity is sometimes shown with the lion mount. In the accompanying illustration—which is of modern workmanship of the Kamakura type—he sits upon a lotus throne supported by his lion *vāhan*. He has six arms, the hands of which hold respectively the *mālā* or prayer rosary; *cintāmani* or *mani* (Jap. *hōjiu no tama* or merely *tama*), the jewel of purity and omnipotence; the *utpala* or blue lotus bud or leaf; the *cakra* or wheel of life—his distinguishing symbol—while one hangs empty beside the lotus throne and the other supports his head.



From a woodcut by Sadatoshi. The *Kara-shishi* and Wave

Kongō Kokuzō *Bosatsu* is one of the Five Kokuzō, each of which is mounted on some animal. They belong to the Kwanchi-in temple of Kyôto and were brought to Japan from the monastery of Ching-lung Ssū of Hsiang, China, by the monk Ê-wên (A.D. 847), and are Chinese modifications of East Indian types.



From a Korean mortuary figure

Kongō *Bosatsu* is the Japanese counterpart of Akāśa-garbha of India, the *Bodhisattva* who symbolizes the matrix of the sky or “Sky Womb” and the essence of the void space. In the accompanying illustration he is seated on the lotus throne and holds in one hand the *ankuśa* or elephant iron goad, and in the other the *cintāmani*. The lion which supports him has the open mouth, expressing the mystic “*Aum*,” symbolizing the *Triratna* or the *Buddha*, the *Dharma*, and the *Sangha*. Both Dai-nichi Nyorai and Kokuzō are the perpetual guardians of the soul after death.

Bishamon is the Japanese counterpart of the Hindu Vais’ravana, also called Kuvera, king of the Yakashas, the yellow guardian of the north. According to some accounts, in reward for his practice of austerity for a thousand years, Brahmā bestowed upon him immortality and made him the god of wealth, with the special guardianship of all the end-less treasures of the earth. In China he is variously known as Wei Po, Ts’ai-shên, and To-wên. His *vāhan* varies, sometimes being the horse, sometimes the elephant, and again the lion. As the latter, it is shown in the Hokusai MANGWA, where the god rides a *Kara-shishi*.

There is another deity also named Bishamon who must not be confused with the above. He is one of the Japanese *Shichifukujin*, “Seven Gods of Happiness,” and not a god of wealth but a god of war. He may be distinguished from the other by a small pagoda which he holds in his hands.



From a Chinese porcelain plate. The Hundred Lions

Nāra-sinha, which means “Man Lion,” was the form assumed by Vishnu in his fourth incarnation to deliver the world from the tyranny of Hiranya Kasipu, a demon invulnerable to gods, men and animals. It is stated that the demon struck a stone pillar from which Vishnu issued—a being in human form with a lion head—and tore the demon to pieces. He is generally depicted in the act of disembowelling the fiend.

Durgā is another name of Pārvatī, the consort of Sivā. She acquired this appellation as given in the following account of the SKAND PURĀNA. The giant by the name of Durga, through the practice of penances and austerity in honour of Brahma, acquired such power that he overcame the three worlds, dethroned the gods and forced them to worship himself. Consequently there followed great catastrophes and calamities, for the rivers changed their courses, fire lost its energy, and the stars refused to send forth their light. The terrified gods appealed to Sivā for relief, and he in turn asked Pārvatī to go forth and destroy the monster. To this she consented, and after a terrible encounter she overcame him. The gods in turn were so grateful that they conferred upon her the giant’s name.





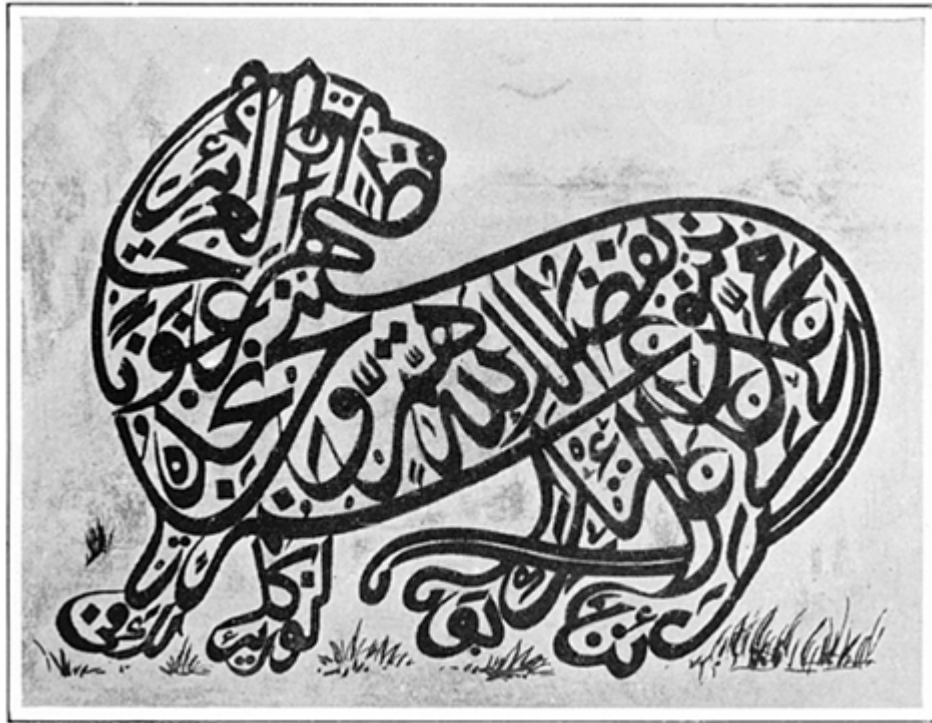
From a woodcut by Shumboku. The *Kara-shishi* and Wind

In the legend, the power of the sun—whose blazing heat coming from high heaven and drying up and destroying the poisonous mists of the plains—is personified in Durgā, the “Inaccessible Destroyer of Demons.” Hence the lion, as the symbol of the sun, became her vehicle. She is generally represented as a formidable warrior with ten arms, holding in one hand the spear with which she slew the giant, in the others various weapons, and is accompanied by the lion.



From a Korean mortuary figure

Among the Egyptians there were many lion-gods and lion-goddesses. In their pantheon the most prominent, which are portrayed either as lions or merely with lion heads, are Shu and Tefnut, and Bast and Sekhet. Shu and Tefnut are the twins of the constellation Gemini, Shu being the lioness-headed god of space and the light—either sunlight or moonlight—which pervaded it. She represented the parching, withering properties of the blazing sun. Tefnut was the sister of Shu, a rain-goddess also lioness-headed, the personification of the moisture of the air.



From a Mohammedan *Tugra*

These two deities were believed to hold the sun in its daily course and guard its successive rise and fall in the morning and evening, as says the OSIRIFIED, "I have come like the sun from the house of the lion, from the great place of the celestial abyss lighted by the lion-gods."



From a Chinese roof-tile

Bast, known as the “Lady of the East,” was the personification of the beneficial solar heat that gives life and supports it; while Sekhet, known as the “Lady of the West,” typified the destructive heat of the sun and fire. Both these goddesses were surmounted with lioness-heads, although Bast more frequently was shown with a cat’s head.



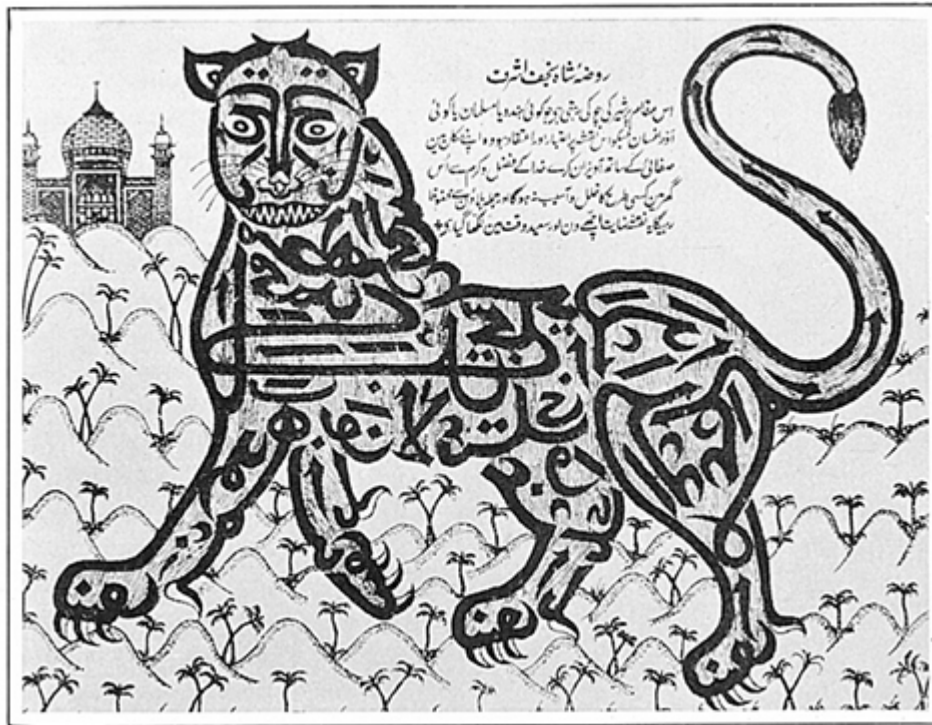
From a Japanese bronze

In the portrayal of the lion of the Far East, the type varies from the naturalistic—as shown in the Chinese painting of “The *Arhat*” by Meicho of the preceding chapter—through grades of conventionalization to that of the Mizunoya *Tennō*, also of the preceding chapter, where the portrayal is less literal, to that of the Dai-nichi Nyorai and the Kongō Kokuzō *Bosatsu*, where the manes, tufts of hair on the legs, and the tail are converted into patterns of radiating curves and whirling spirals, consummating in forms distinctly canine.



From a Japanese bronze

In the Lion illustrations entitled "Japanese Bronze," the features resemble those of a dog more than those of a lion, so that they may quite consistently be called *Koma-inu*. They are of Fujiwara workmanship and represent the last of the best examples of the Chinese types of the T'ang style that found their way to Japan. One bears the evidence of having had a covering of gold and the others of silver. Together they represent the great Taoist principle of opposites which the Chinese call the *Yang* and the *Yin*, and the Japanese, *In-yō*. The gilded one on the left, with closed mouth, symbolizes the masculine and positive *Yang* or *Yō*, and the silver one on the right, with open mouth, the feminine or negative *Yin* or *In*. In China, such lions were quite frequently used to weight curtains which screened doorways; but their principal function was to protect temples and palaces, in fact every kind of edifice, from the entry of evil spirits. Apropos of this use, there is a legend which relates that in the Western Sea there was a Paradise Mountain, in the centre of which was a palace which had its gates guarded by two stone lions. So imposing were they that they inspired Yen Sui Hou of the T'ang dynasty to write as follows:



From a Mohammedan *Tugra*

“The lion is indeed a strange animal. It came from the western country. In appearance it seems powerful, and in nature is very ferocious.

“Why have we lions now, since the world is quiet and peaceful? They are not needed for warfare although their beauty gives us pleasure. They surely have their place in this world, since they serve the uses of the gods, and in their beauty delight the eyes.





From a Chinese roof-tile

“How skilful is the sculptor who carved these out of stone. He who has power should display it; he who is really beautiful may manifest it, even through stone.



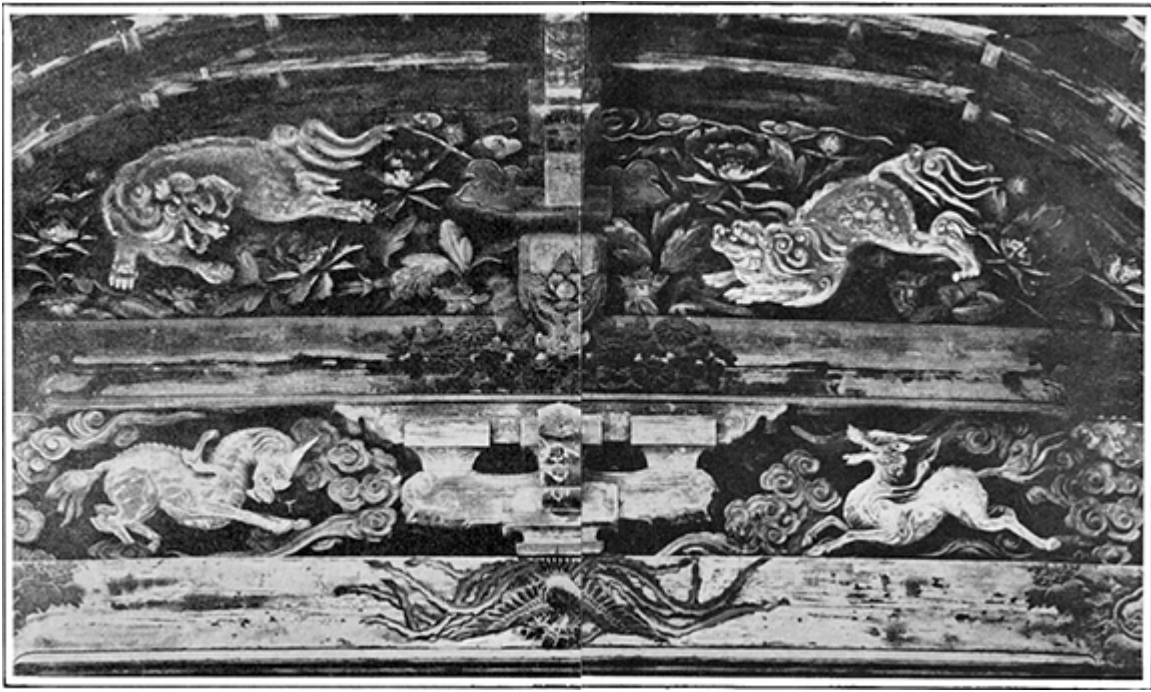
From a Chinese teak-wood carving

“These lions sit at their doors, yet they protect us against devils as far as ten thousand miles away. Why trouble foreign tribes to send us tributes of living lions when we can use those of stone? Why provide food for animals when there are so many hungry beings?



From the statue of Kongō Kokuzō Bosatsu, Kwanchi-in temple, Kyōto

“The stone lions are imbued by our literary ideals and therefore—unlike their living brutal counterparts—are tame and gentle and harmless.”



From carvings of the *Karamon* of Hongwanji, Kyoto

The size of these “spirit” lions of stone or bronze, which were placed in front of temples and official residences, was restricted by law according to the importance of the building or official. Their particular postures likewise were regulated, for while the lion ordinarily is posed sitting, before some of the palaces of princes it is standing.

The earliest record in Chinese literature of this use of stone lions pertains to a pair which were placed in front of the palace of Huo Pin, a mandarin who died 117 B.C. Not, however, until the T’ang and Sung dynasties—the golden era of Chinese art—did they become common; but the later examples differ from the earlier forms by having distinctly Tibetan characteristics. These appear to reflect influences of various cults, such as the sun worship of Egypt, the nature worship of the Euphrates, and superstitions that persisted from ancient Babylon and Assyria—the combination being expressed in the forms of Greek art, which at that time seem to have been popular wherever Greek commerce was able to carry its wares.

This creation is generally represented as a thick-set little beast with a large head considerably out of proportion, covered with a heavy curling mane, and having large globular, protruding eyes. Its legs are short and stately and its tail very bushy.



From a Chinese teak-wood carving

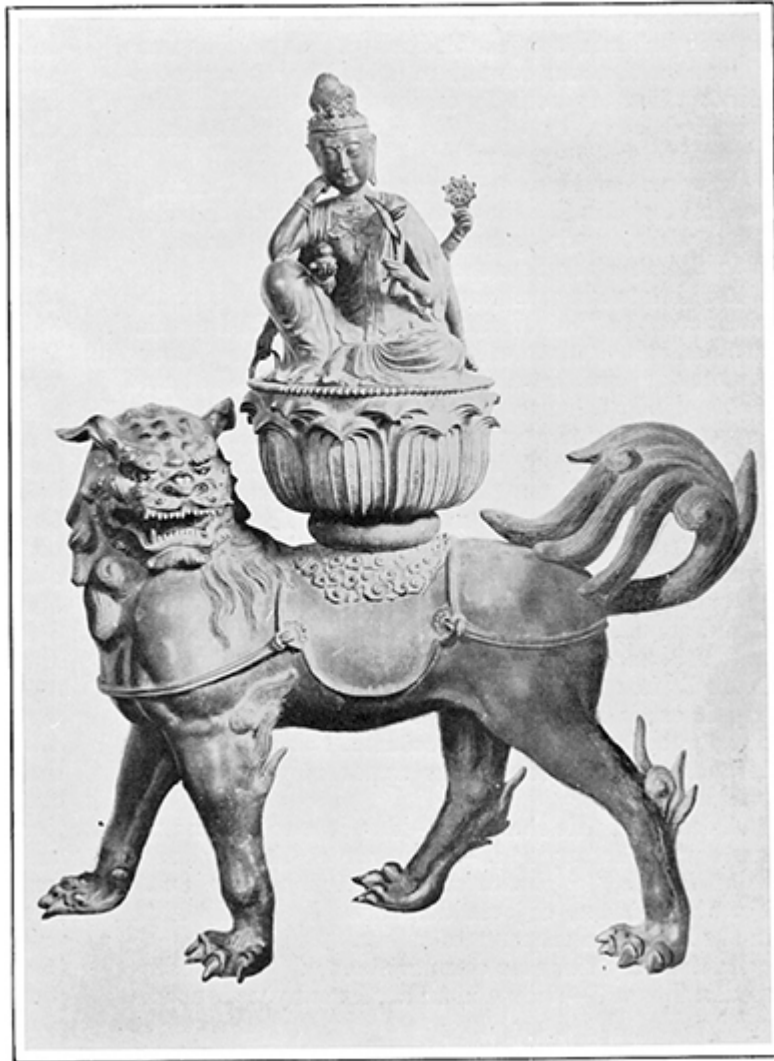
The implicit faith of the Lāmaists in the power of these idols was manifested when, in 1916 at Peking, a pair of Ming lions was moved from the palace of Prince Wu to a place outside the *Chien Mên*. One of them evidently objected to being dislodged, for it seemed impossible to move it. A Buddhist priest was called, and only after he had offered wine to its spirit, placed on its breast an incantation written in red characters on yellow paper, and bound up its eyes with red cloth, did it succumb and cease to offer resistance. Many such superstitions are directly traceable to the history of the life of Buddha.

Pertaining to this relationship to the lion, the following interesting legend has been given in the *PAO CH'ENG*, a work of the Ming dynasty:

“King Ajastasatru, a secret foe to Buddhism, invited Gautama and his disciples to come to his capital with the intention of putting them to death. His plan was to attack them with a herd of five inebriated elephants. But when, at the appointed time, the mad creatures, fiercely trumpeting, charged upon the unfortunates, wrecking walls and buildings, the disciples flew, Ananta alone remaining. Thereupon the Great Being quietly extended one hand and transformed each of its fingers into a raging lion. These roared with such fury that the elephants, overcome with terror, instantly became sobered, and, prostrating themselves, begged for mercy. Then, as in similar anecdotes, they became repentant and were converted to Buddhism.”

Among the remaining illustrations of this chapter, that of the initial page represents a Japanese bronze of *Kara-shishi* with the brocade ball, offering a very distinctive example not only of the little lion, but a very definite delineation of its attribute, and showing clearly in its perforations the *shippō* design defined in the preceding chapter.

The two Korean mortuary figures, although found in Korea, are believed to be of Chinese workmanship antedating the middle of the Sung dynasty, since they are unaccompanied by either the *chu* or the cub. They are made of white clay and bear evidence of having been covered with brown or orange glaze. The one on the right has a single horn like that of the *ch'i-lin*, and the other, the *tama*, "jewel of omnipotence," already defined.



From a Japanese bronze statue of Dai-nichi Nyorai

The two figures of Chinese teak-wood are typical of the rich and elaborate carvings of the Ming dynasty. The female on the left fondles a cub and the male on the right, the *chu*, "mystic ball." Both are adorned with the single horn and are mounted on elaborately carved stands quite characteristic of this period.

The most grotesque of all the given examples are those of the Chinese roof-tiles. They are made of clay, glazed with yellow, orange, and green merging into blue, and also show the ornate qualities and extravagances of the Ming period. The one on the left is fortified by dragon claws, by which it both secures its position on the rectangular base and likewise holds a *chu* by its streamers as well as significant ornaments. The one on the right has canine feet and a *chu* floating beside the angular base held by sacred streamers. It is the steed of Wei Po, who holds in his hands small images of the mystic ball and the jewelled mace. Such tiles were placed on the four corners of a building as a protection

against the activity of demons—each tile being presided over by the Regent of the Direction according to the corner.

In some sections the corner roof-tiles of buildings are fashioned in the shape of lions, as a guard against fire; while, again, a small image of the animal is placed before the household god.

An interesting homophone exists between the character for “lion,” *shih*, and that for the Imperial decorations of state officials, known as the “Great Instructor and Lesser Instructor,” *T'ai Shih* and *Shao Shih*; hence these important ranks are represented by the conventional lion.

One of the most interesting but rarely known subjects related to this animal is given in the accompanying illustration entitled “The Hundred Lions,” and significant to the sophisticated as symbolizing “A Rough Sea.” It is not unusual to find such subjects as “The Hundred Cranes,” “The Hundred Stags,” or even “The Hundred Boys,” but the particular use to which “The Hundred Lions” has been put, and the idea which it expresses, is not only very subtle and meaningful, but a good example of the oriental habit of making comparisons between things apparently unlike and unrelated.

A design of this character—that is, one that represents water in any form—is known to the Japanese as an *hibuse*, “a charm of protection against fire.” For this reason, objects decorated by it are kept in the home for purposes of safety.

In the very singular compositions of “A Mohammedan *Tugra*”—shown in an accompanying illustration—the form of the animal is distinctly leonine, being produced by an arrangement of Arabic characters. For since the followers of Mohammed were forbidden to picture natural forms realistically, ornamental caligraphy became popular for the double reason that it served the purpose of instruction as well as decoration.

The repeat of the pattern of the design consists of either a single word, a phrase, or a sentence—generally some text from the KORAN—designed to teach a moral precept.

The earliest form of the character used for the *Tugra* is “*Aum*”—the Sanskrit name of the deity by which the follower of Ali begins his prayers—and many of them are in the shape of a lion. This is said to have originated in the transcription of the famous poem of Nad-i-Ali, where Ali’s name, Asadulla, in Arabic, had the significance of *Asad*, “lion” and *ulla*, “God,” hence, the “Lion of God.” These lion *Tugra* were regarded by the Mohammedans as a potent protection against disease and all forms of evil.

In Japan, the mythical lion seems to have arrived at a stage of finality in the familiar *Kara-shishi* that admits of no further modification.

In the illustration of a woodcut by Sadatoshi, entitled “*Kara-shishi* and Wave,” a traditional subject is most beautifully designed. The wave is associated with the lion, because the roar of the beast when infuriated is said to resemble the roar of the ocean during a storm. The inscriptions on this woodcut contain the following poems:

“The *shishi* beholding the rising sun or moon is ready to seize it, thinking it to be his *tama*”

“When the roaring lion, coming from his mountain den, sharpens his claws, all beasts turn their faces to the cliff in terror.”

Another popular subject, “*Kara-shishi* and Wind,” is shown in the woodcut by Shumboku. Here the strength and fierceness of the animal is likened to the power and fury of the gale. Yet, notwithstanding that the wind is the most forceful of the elements, it cannot overcome the lion. For it is said, “As the wind cuts the air, so the lion cuts the wind.” Again, the swiftness of this creature is compared with the velocity of the wind, for it is claimed that the lion can travel a thousand miles a minute.

In the reproduction of the wood carvings of the *Karamon* of Hongwanji of Kyoto, three of the mythical creatures—which have been given in preceding chapters—are represented. The *Kara-shishi* and peony, elaborately interwoven, occupy the upper ridge; the *ch'i-lin* and cloud, the middle one; and the *hō-ō*, the lower one. In combination, they symbolize strength and wisdom, justice and benevolence, grace and beauty. This illustration furnishes a good example of a composition in which similar motives, but differently represented, are arranged according to principles of “balance,” instead of the principles of “symmetry” which prevail in occidental design.

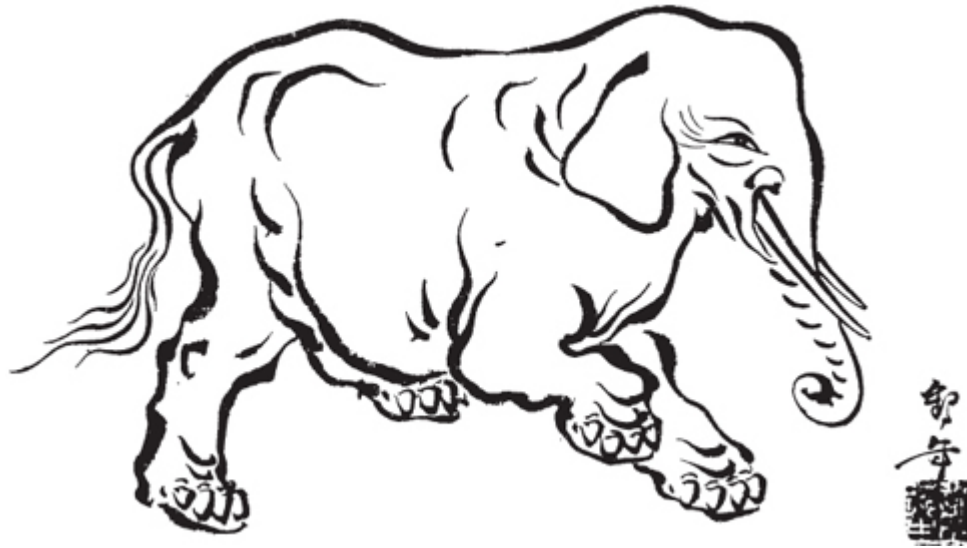


## CHAPTER X

# THE ELEPHANT

*The elephant is a huge creature. Its body is very heavy and it has the strength of ten bulls. Its appearance is very strange. When we look at it from the front we think we are seeing it from the rear; for its trunk is like its tail. When it walks, it is as if a mountain were moving, but it is difficult to know whether it is coming or going.*

KUO P'U, *Chin dynasty.*



From a painting by Kakunen

THE elephant, known by the Chinese as *hsiang*, by the Japanese as *zō*, and by the Hindus as *gaja*, is indigenous to India and adjacent countries, it being a native of China only in its most remote south-western regions. It was brought into the Flowery Kingdom as a tribute from conquered nations, usually from Annam—now Cochin China—and Yü Tien—now Yunan. These contributions usually included as many as ten elephants, and so highly were they prized by the Emperor that it was not uncommon for him to honour their arrival by an official banquet.

According to ancient annals these animals were kept in the *Hsiang Fang Chiao*, “Elephant Stables” at the capital, and once a month they were led to the river to bathe, on which occasion the common people had the opportunity of seeing them.

They were tamed and trained for the amusement of the court, having been taught to dance to music and perform many of the feats familiar to the modern circus. At state affairs they filed before their Imperial master, dropped on their knees and bowed their respects.

One emperor was so gratified with these courtesies that he conferred upon each of six elephants the rank of an official of the fourth degree, with all of its accompanying emoluments, including a salary and a keeper.

But the principal use of this picturesque mammal was for Imperial processions; for whenever the Emperor visited the Temple of Heaven or the Ancestral Halls to make his sacrifices, elephants led the impressive cortège.

In pairs, ranging from six to a dozen, accompanied by their keepers on foot, they bore on their backs, in place of the usual howdah, the various ceremonial appurtenances. The Imperial party, likewise, was not averse to the enjoyment of a lofty ride, and not infrequently the Emperor himself, in his gorgeous chariot, was carried in the same manner.

But for court display only the rare white elephant was qualified, and any such animal found throughout the empire was captured and reserved for this purpose.

The ordinary black elephant was used for an entirely different purpose, and trained not only to act as a beast of burden, but as a workman, in which capacity it was particularly useful in tilling the soil. Relating to this the TI WANG SHIH CHI gives an account of the tombs of the early emperors, Shun and Yü, having been kept in order by elephants, which periodically ploughed the ground around them by means of their tusks.

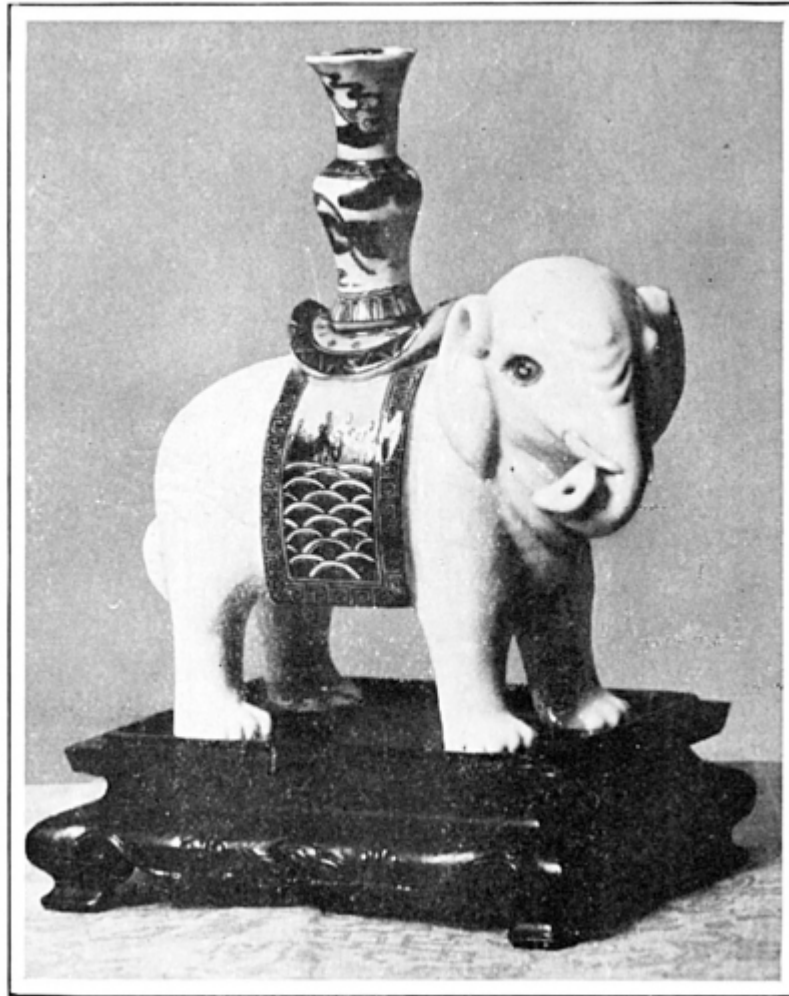
The most familiar legend—illustrated in the given woodcut by Eitoku—associated with such service is related in connection with the Emperor Shun, who, when a mere child, was commanded by an unreasonable father and a cruel stepmother to go to the Li Mountains and cultivate the land. Although the task was entirely beyond his strength he did not hesitate, but dutifully obeyed. He had, however, scarcely begun his work before an elephant came to his assistance and ploughed the fields. The Emperor Yao, hearing of the lad's virtue, in due time rewarded him by the bestowal of the hand of his daughter. Shun subsequently became Yao's successor and, as Tai Shun, "Great Shun," he has ever been known as one of the Twenty-four Paragons of Filial Piety.



From a Chinese embroidery

The elephant was not only employed in hunting wild beasts, but in ancient warfare also played an important part. The latter usage, however, was not original with China. It prevailed in the Indian wars

as well as in those between Carthage and Rome, for it is related that Hannibal (210 B.C.) employed elephants, from which the Romans fled in terror. But later, the Romans themselves introduced the formidable creatures into their service, often sending them into battle with flaming torches tied to their heads. And, in one of the triumphal entries of Cæsar into Rome, his chariot was drawn by forty of these picturesque animals.



From a Chinese porcelain

Of the characteristics of this mighty beast much has been written. He is not only credited with great sagacity but with a knowledge of human speech. Among the many tales told of its intelligence, one relates that, upon an occasion, when pursued by hunters and suspecting that they wanted its tusks, it settled the matter by beating the coveted ivories against a tree trunk until they broke off and fell to the ground, and then, true to its calculation, it was allowed to proceed in peace.

A very singular legend relating to the elephant is taken from the *WAKAN JIMBUTSU SHU*, a Japanese book on ancient Chinese myths. It is called *Taihei Koki*, and it is quite characteristic of the operations of the creative imaginations of a very unsophisticated people.



From a Chinese bronze

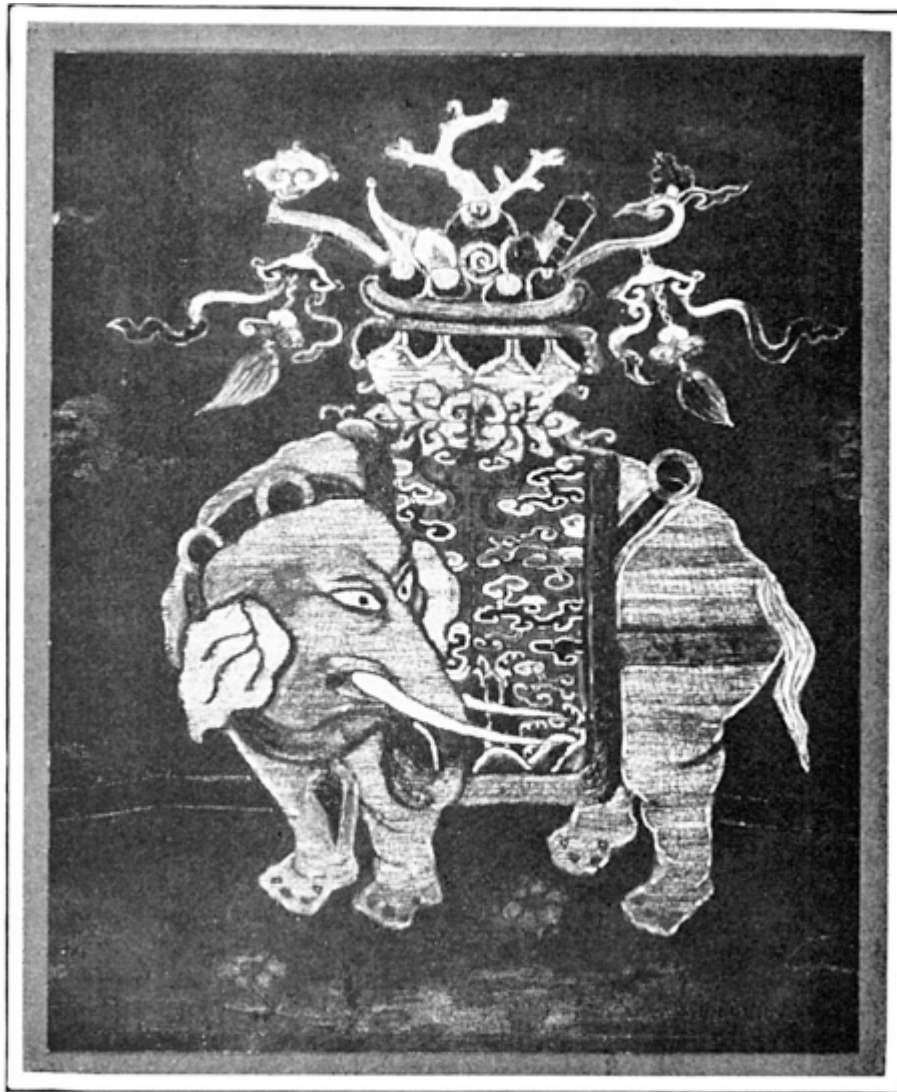
The legend relates that in the time of the T'ang dynasty a man named Wu—famed for his bravery—was one night awakened from his sleep by a very loud knocking at his door. Upon opening it, he was confronted by a *shōjō*—the little red-haired gnome so popular in Japanese folk-lore. The *shōjō* said, “I come as a messenger of an elephant, because he is unable to speak. He is in great trouble, and knowing that you are a very brave and powerful man he asks you to help him. There is about two hundred miles away a cave in which there lives a monster serpent that, prowling about the forests, captures the elephants and then swallows them. So terrified are these poor creatures that they spend

most of their time in keeping away from this beast. For this reason, my poor, unhappy friend beseeches you to go to the cave and kill this destroyer of his tribe.”



From a Chinese porcelain

Thereupon, Wu’s spirit of adventure, coupled with his sympathy, was aroused, so, taking his bow and some poisoned arrows, he sallied forth in quest of the serpent’s lair. In due time he arrived at the cave and there, true to the *shōjō*’s story, just within the opening lay the malignant monster. Its aspect was enough to strike terror to the heart of any man, for, supported on its huge coiling body lay its horned head, with eyes as brilliant as mirrors and teeth resembling sharp sword-blades.



From a Chinese embroidery

The brave Wu, however, was undaunted, so, concealing his presence behind a great rock, he shot at it, hitting each eye successively. Then he had the experience of his life, for there followed a tumult equal to a combination of cataclysms. At once a succession of roars and flashings of light, that reminded him of a thunder and lightning storm, issued from the cave, while simultaneously the creature's huge body, as in convulsions, hurled itself into the open almost at the feet of Wu, and expired. Thereupon this warrior, guided by the *shōjō*, explored the demon's den and found a veritable mountain of elephant bones, proving the assertions of his companion.

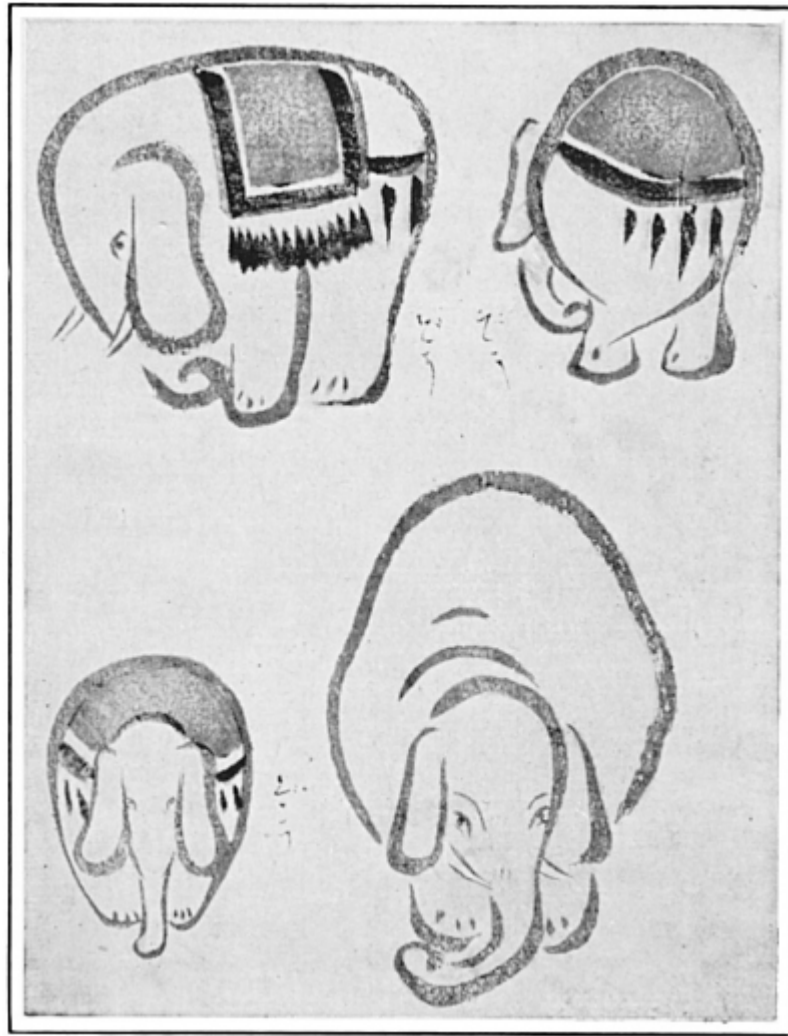


From a Chinese bronze

When through the forest the news was spread that the serpent was dead, the elephants, in their great gratitude, assembled at Wu's home. They surrounded the place, and on bended knees and with bowing heads and saluting trunks, expressed their profound thanks-giving by presenting to their deliverer, as a reward for his great service, their only treasure—their ivory tusks.

From this tale has come the oriental saying, "The serpent swallows the elephant, and after three years the bones of the elephant come out of the serpent."

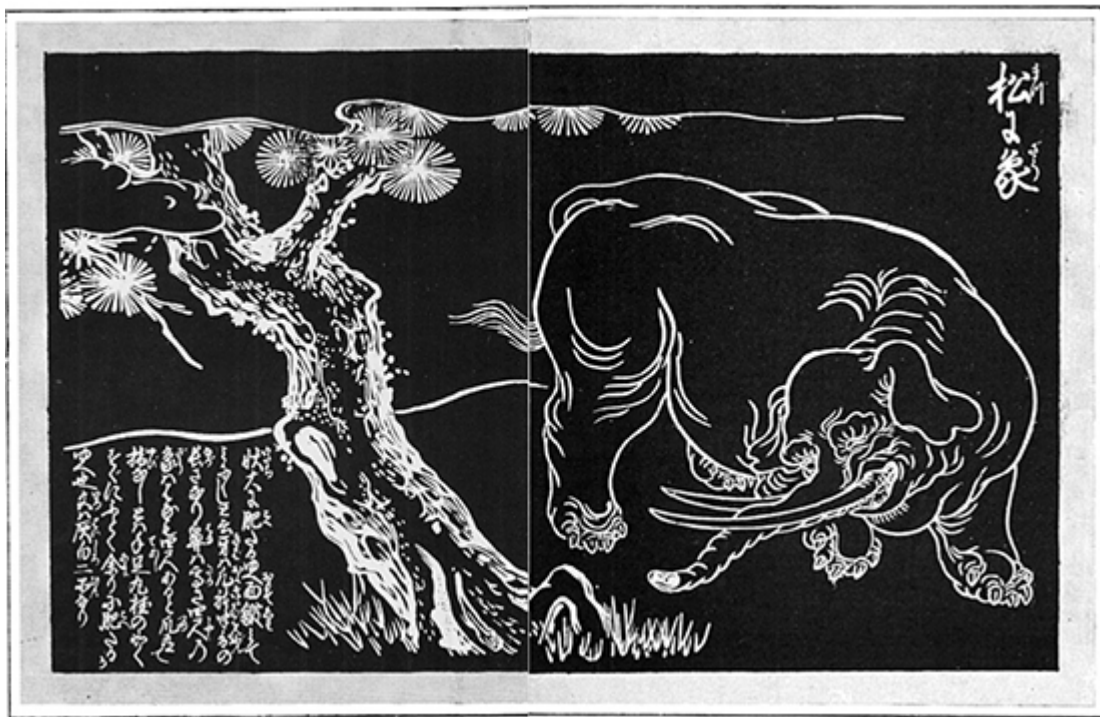




From a coloured woodcut by Masayoshi

An ancient writer states that the elephant indulges in moon worship; that at the increase of the luminary the herds assemble in the forest and with uplifted trunks wave long tree branches in adoration of the Queen of Night. Pliny also writes: "They have withal religious reverence with a kind of devotion... when the moon beginneth to appeare fresh and bright, they come downe by whole herds to a certain river... where after that they are washed and solemnlie purified, by sprinkling and dashing themselves all over with water, and have saluted and adored after the manner of their planet, they return again into the woods and chases, carrying before them their young calves that be wearied and tired."

The Japanese say that the elephant is humble, for he always carries his nose toward the ground, while only the proud keep theirs turned upward.

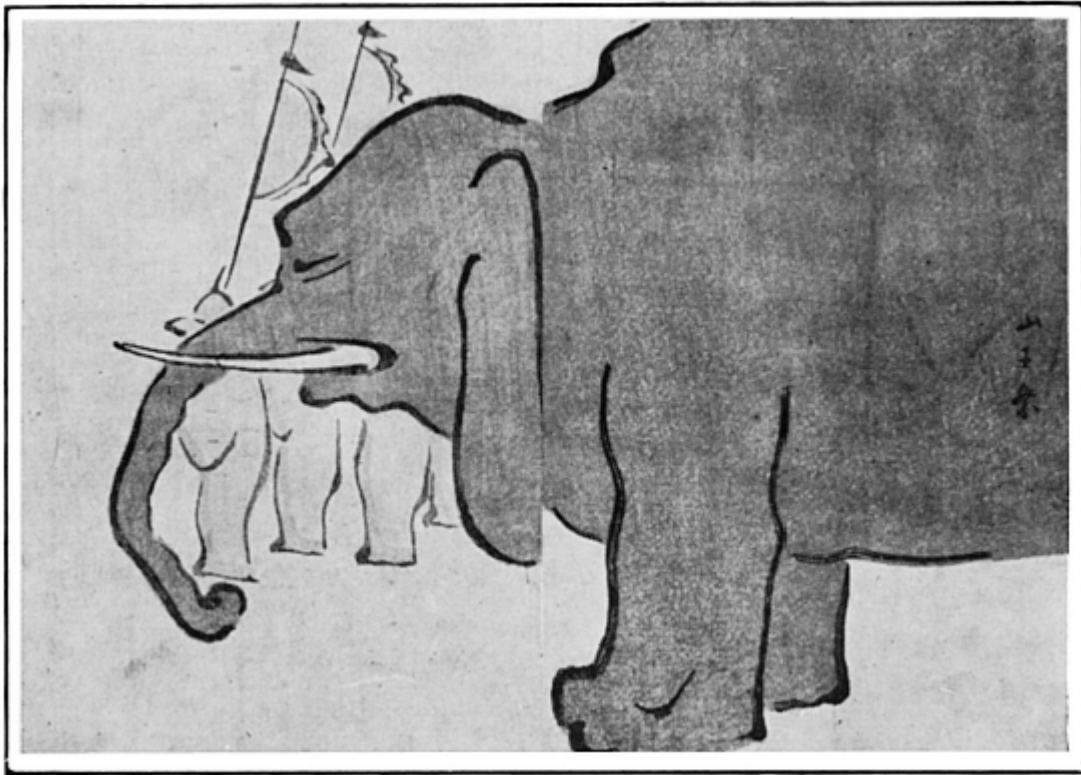


From a woodcut by Morikuni

Yet, notwithstanding that the elephant is a quiet, peaceable and loving creature, he still has his enemies and his feuds. His principal foe is the rhinoceros, but there are also legends describing fearful battles between him and the dragon, in which combats he displayed his sagacity, for, when the great serpent wound itself around the feet of the ponderous creature in order to throw him to the ground, the elephant, seeing his advantage, permitted his heavy body to fall upon his foe and crushed it to death. Such combats are said to have been the cause of the production of cinnabar, due to the staining of the earth by the blood resulting from this sanguinary struggle.

But while the elephant does not hesitate to battle with creatures of his own size, he is terribly afraid of a mouse, because he is unable to catch it and fears it may run up his nostril. He is also very much disturbed at the sight of blood, as well as of the juice of a mulberry tree, which is of the same colour.

In hunting the elephant, different methods are given by ancient writers. One states that a wall or tree is undermined so that either will fall when the beast leans against it while sleeping. Since it is believed that the bulky creature cannot lie down nor even regain his footing when he falls, he becomes an easy victim to his captor.



From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige

Another method is described by a Western author as follows: "Two maidens go into the desert: one beareth a vessel and the other a sword. They sing aloud and the beast hath liking when he heareth them, and cometh to them and falleth asleep anon, for the liking of the song. Then one maid sticketh him in the throat with the sword and the other taketh his blood in a vessel. And with the blood the people of the countrie dye clothe and doth colour it therewith."



From a coloured wood cut by Shigenobu

While the Chinese undoubtedly inherited the elephant with all its tradition and significance from India, they likewise invested it with a meaning akin to their own beliefs and customs. Hence, according to an old Chinese dictionary, the SHUO WEN, the word for “appearance,” is a homophone for the word for “elephant,” although written with a different character. In this book it states:

The Heavenly Sign appeared in the form of a White Elephant.



From a woodcut by Eitoku

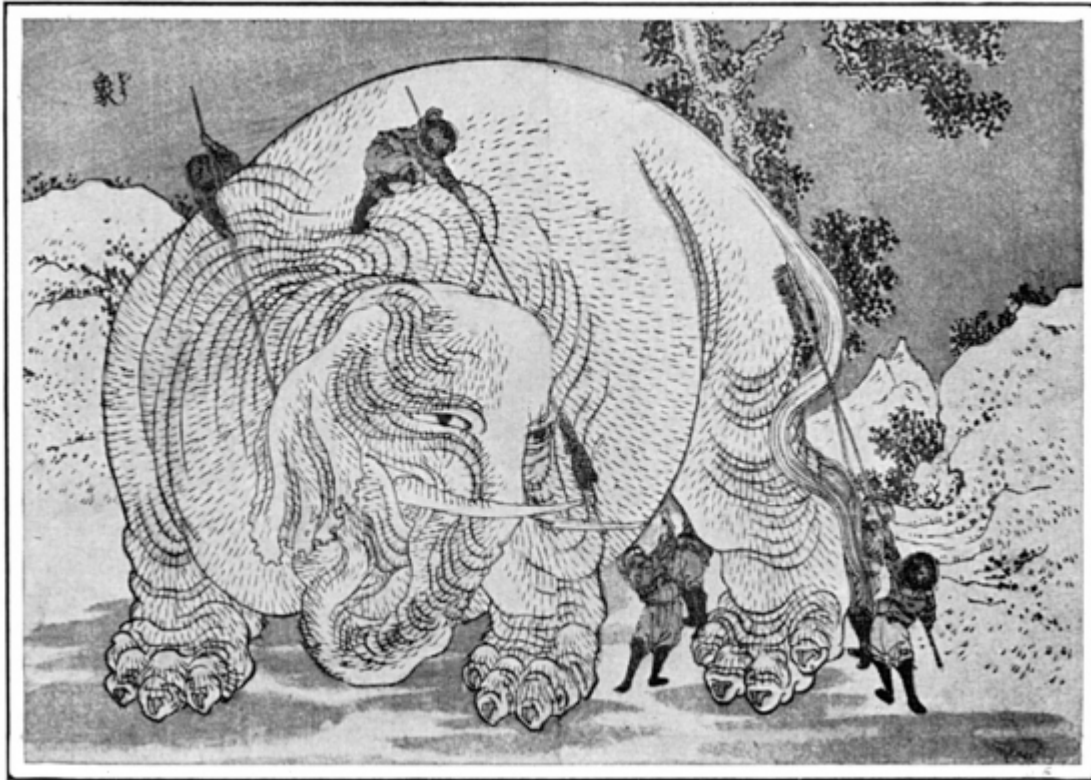
Then, according to an old belief that the sound of thunder stimulates the growth of ivory tusks, the elephant has come to symbolize certain signs in the heavens. This significance may be an outgrowth of the astrological myth which claims that the star *Yao Kang*, “Light of Jade”—despatched from the heavens and appearing on earth as a white elephant, “The Earth-shaking Beast”—became the symbol of universal sovereignty, even as the *ch’lin* was the symbol of successful government. In the same vein Wu Shu of the Sung dynasty writes: “Elephants are the spirits of the heavenly stars. They are born into the world to be the gifts to emperors. Their bodies are heavy but their minds are light. Their legs are clumsy but their trunks are skilful. Their skins are like earth piled on hills, and their flesh is like an accumulation of many objects on shelves. They are gentle and tender by nature, always good and loyal to their masters and never destructive.”

In an old Indian zodiac the sign of Capricorn is represented as an elephant issuing from a leviathan. Again, in India the elephant appears as one of the animals representing the Four Directions,

holding the position of guardian of the East, just as the horse has dominion over the South, the bull over the West, and the lion over the North.

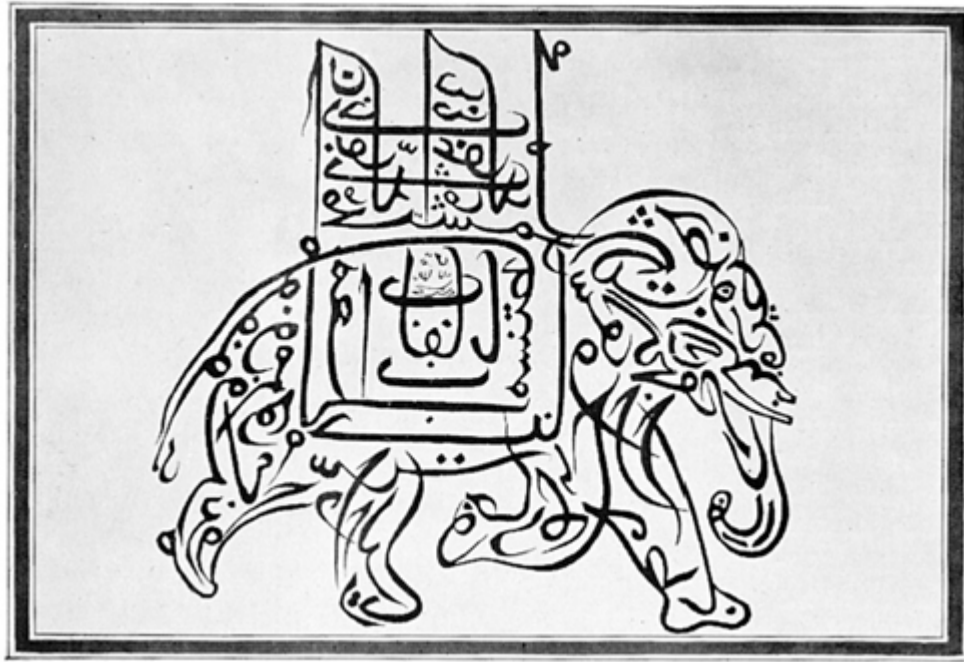
In art, from prehistoric times to the present day, the elephant has figured most extensively. Its earliest representations may be found in the caves of southern France, attributed to the Quaternary age, while, again, its form may be seen on Egyptian pottery of the Neolithic age. Occasionally it appears in the ancient art of other countries, but only as a borrowed form from India and China.

India being its habitat, it naturally follows that the most notable examples of the animal's portrayal are to be found in that country. Nearly every stronghold of importance has its "Elephant Gate," and "Frieze of Elephants" adorning the doorways of temples and palaces. Capitals of monolithic columns frequently include the "Animals of the Four Directions," with the elephant prominently representing the East.



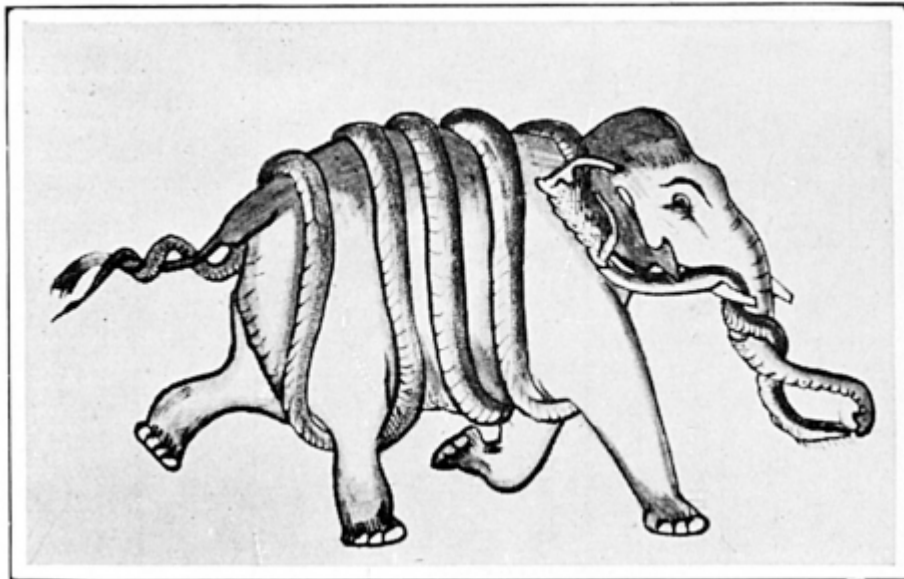
From a woodcut by Hokusai

The great statue at Karnak is among the world's most celebrated sculptures, since it possesses qualities of the highest degree of monumental design.



From a Mohammedan *Tugra*

It occurs very frequently in Hindu paintings, representing ceremonial pageants, animal combats, and the like. The earliest known examples are the celebrated frescoes on the walls of the Ajanta caves in western India. These portrayals are said to have been executed *c.* 100 or 200 B.C., but are curiously realistic and modern in feeling.

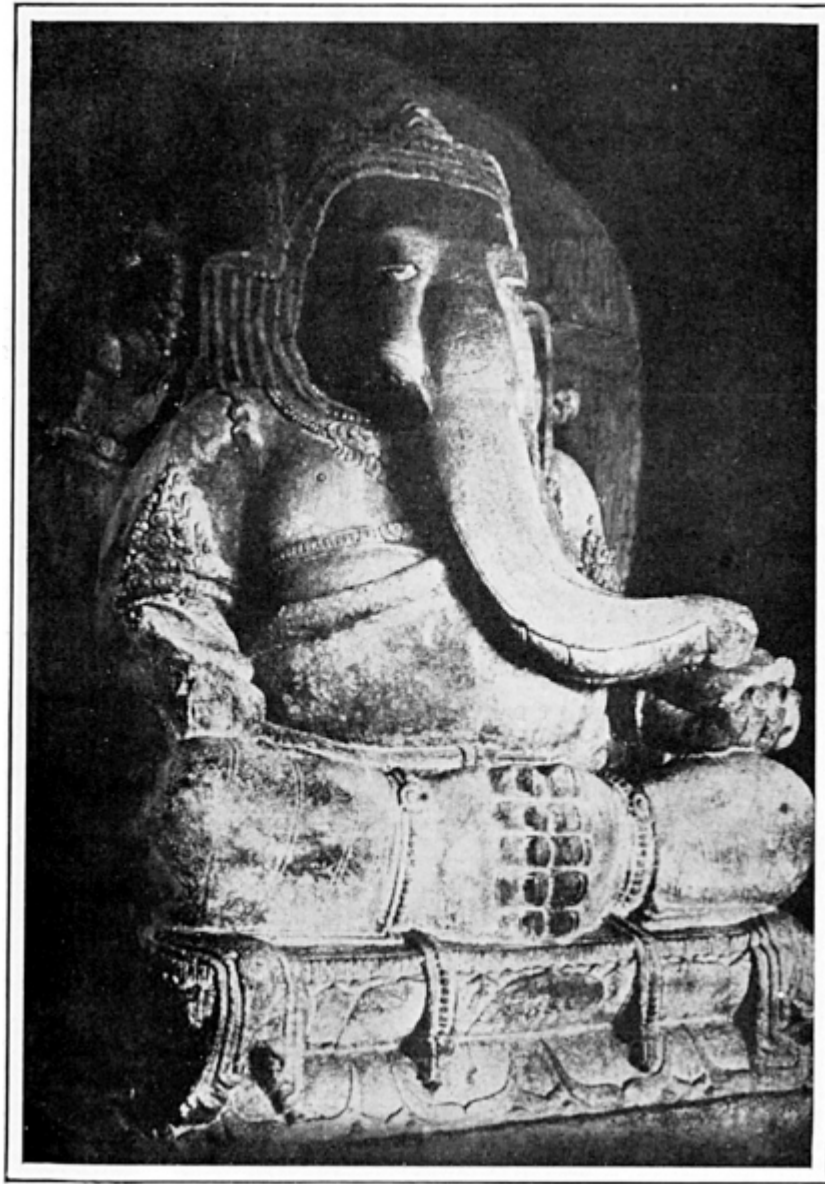


From an Indian painting. Suffering with Colic

In China, although the elephant is an alien, its form is very common in art. It is to be found in every workable material and represented not only in every attitude common to animal life, but harnessed with costly, jewelled trappings, bedecked with gorgeously patterned saddle-rugs; and shown carrying on its back, in place of a howdah, the sacred treasures. These ladings, as shown in the



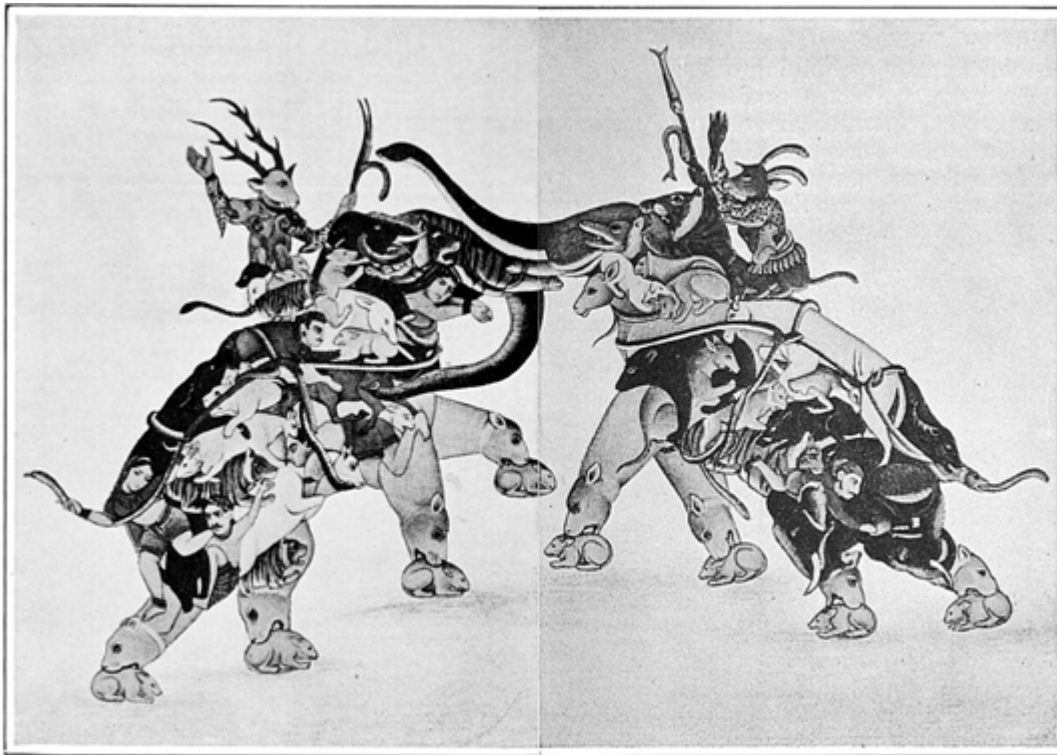
accompanying illustrations, may consist of a shrine, an incense burner, the flaming pearl, a flower-vase, or a receptacle holding collections of Buddhist and Taoist emblematic objects.



From a Hindu sculpture. Ganesha

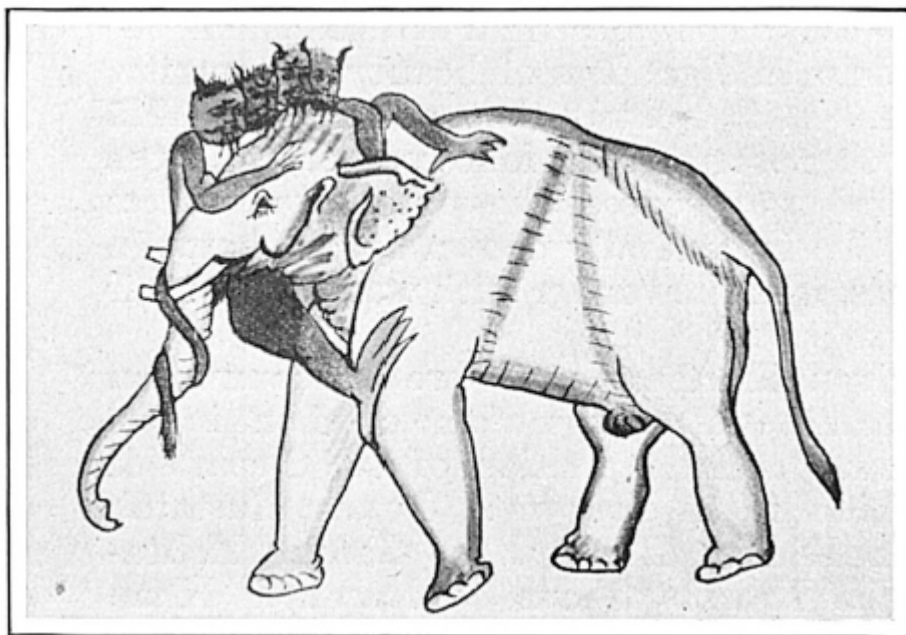
As in India, so in China, elephant monuments of great size cut from a single stone may be seen in various parts of the empire; notable among these are the statues which flank the avenue leading to the Ming tombs, both at Peking and Nankin.





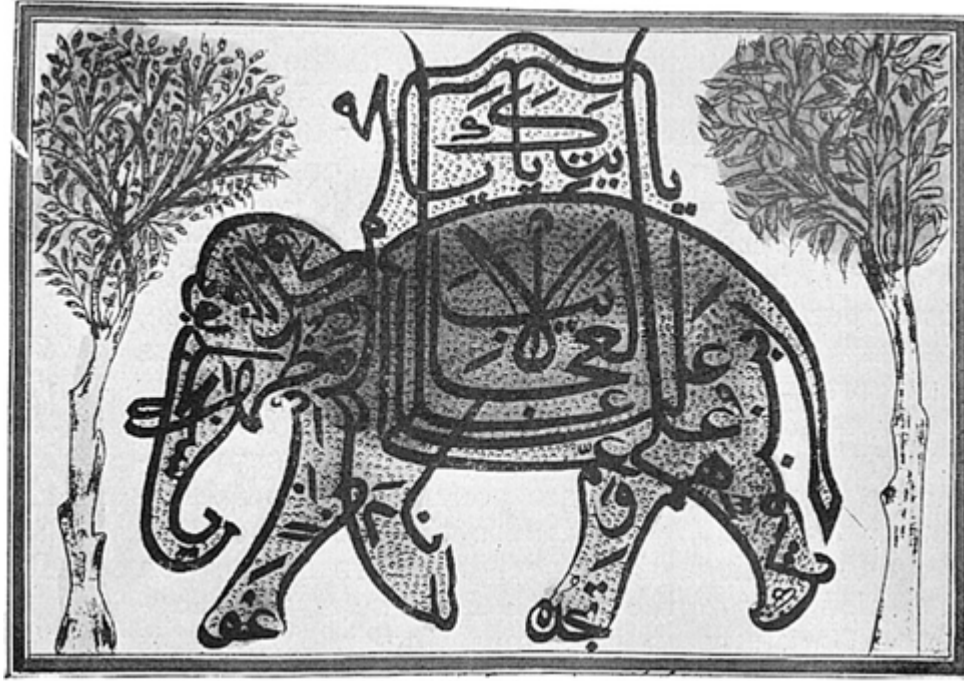
From an Indian painting. A Combat of Elephants

In Japanese art it is quite common in sculpture forms, and those that are reproductions of the old Chinese designs are frequently very beautiful. It rarely occurs in painting, but may be found in the MANGWA and illustrated books, examples of which are herewith given in the wood-cuts by Morikuni and Masayoshi—the latter being markedly typical of the abbreviated representation so characteristic of this School.



From an Indian painting. Suffering with Headache

In the woodcuts by Hiroshige and Shigenobu are represented the common appearance of the elephant in Japan. When it first occurred about two centuries ago, led in procession through the narrow streets of Yedo, now Tokyo, so huge was its body that in passing through such thoroughfares it over-shadowed and darkened the small houses of that period. Its appearance so impressed the populace that, in subsequent pageants, an artificial elephant of exaggerated size was the chief attraction.



From a Mohammedan *Tugra*

In the woodcut by Hokusai is represented the traditional Chinese subject, “Brushing the Elephant.” In this, Hokusai is trying to convey the idea of the immense size of the creature by representing the men proportionately small.

Among the ancient deities, the Hindu god, Ganesha or Ganapati, seems to be the most distinctive. As shown in the given illustrations, he is represented as a grotesque, corpulent dwarf having an elephant-head with only one tusk but four arms, although at times only two are shown, while again there may be six or eight. He wears the usual Hindu ornaments, including a necklace, bracelets, anklets, and a crown surmounted by a serpent.

In his hands he holds emblems which vary in different representations and include the winged *sankha*, “conch-shell”; the *ankusa*, “elephant goad or hook”; the *kastrika*, “chopper or axe”; the *utpala*, “blue lotus” the *mālā*, “rosary” the *kapāla*, “skull-cap” holding cakes, from which he feeds himself; and an object which may be the *phurbu*, “dirk,” or possibly his missing tusk, while one hand is frequently posed in the mystic *mudrā*.

He is generally enshrined, and his throne is decorated with lotus petals. His attendant and messenger is the rat, the symbol of prudence and foresight. He is more of a secular god than a divine being, and yet he is depicted with the *ūrṇā*—the forehead eye of spiritual insight. He is in reality the god of wealth and worldly wisdom, who combines human intelligence with the sagacity of the elephant. He is universally worshipped; his image being seen in all Hindu temples, in the streets, in the high-roads, in the forests, and on the open plains. He is particularly popular with tradesmen and is enshrined in their shops. In fact, no business enterprise is undertaken without first invoking him; nor is a building erected until his image, anointed with oil and decorated with flowers, has consecrated the ground.



From an Indian drawing. Ganesha

All sacrifices, religious ceremonies, and festivals, both public and private, are begun with a supplication to him. All books are prefaced by the Salutation to Ganesha, for he is also the patron saint of the scribe. His festival is celebrated in Bombay on the third day of the month *Bhadra* (August-September) with great rejoicings, but in Bengal it passes unnoticed.

He is thought to be a relic of indigenous mythology absorbed into the Hindu pantheon, although there are a number of legends which account for his origin. The one most familiar is that he is the elder son of Sivā, the Destroyer, the third person of the Hindu triad, and his wife, Pārvatī. Of the manner in which he came by his elephant head, there are several versions. The one generally given is that Pārvatī, so proud of her offspring, invited all the gods to see him; and in the company came the ill-omened Sani, the planet Saturn, whose malefic influence is ever destructive. Scarcely had he looked upon the child, before his baneful gaze burnt off his head.

But Vishnu, the Preserver and second person of the triad, seeing the catastrophe, immediately mounted his feathered *vāhan*, the *Garuda*, and went in search of another head. Seeing an elephant asleep, he cut off its head and hastily carried it back and clapped it upon the neck of the child.

Another misfortune later befell the god, for in an encounter with Parasurāma—who tried to force his way into the apartment of Ganesha's father, while the latter was sleeping—he lost one of his tusks, hence he also was known as *Ekadanta*, the Single-Tusked.

The elephant is also represented with Lakshmī, the *Sakti* of Vishnu, and goddess of beauty, prosperity, and fortune. It is related that at her birth Mā Gangā and other sacred rivers followed her, while the heavenly elephants poured the pure river waters upon her. She is generally shown seated between two elephants, who shower her with water from their trunks.

In the given illustration of two Mohammedan *Tugras* the calligraphic design of the elephant in one gives the name and designation of the Nawab of Tawara, which is as follows: Janab Mustatab Mualla

Vala Khitab Hazur Faiz Ganjur Mohtashimud-Daula Nawab Shaus Mohammed Khan Sahib Bahadur Shaukat Jung Firman-rabai Dorul Rijasat Jawara Mahum wa Maqfur.

In the other, the Arabic characters read: “Address Ali, who is the source of all manifestations of wonder. You will find him a helper for yourself in distress, and your anxieties will vanish in the immediate future, Oh Mohammed! by reason of your being a *Nabi*, ‘prophet,’ and Oh Ali! by reason of your being a *Valayet*, ‘close to God.’”

The two reproductions of Indian paintings entitled “Suffering with Colic” and “Suffering with Headache” offer very interesting examples not only of Hindu art, but of Hindu imagination. If according to the belief common to oriental countries, that all disease is caused by evil spirits—in either animal or human form—then why should not the poor elephant think that his colic was caused by a frightful serpent crushing the life out of him, or that his headache was caused by demons?

The remaining illustration consists of one of the singular composite animal designs which are common with the Hindus. These people not only represent the forms of natural creatures, such as are shown in the “Combat of Elephants,” but they also invent strange and fantastic monsters by combining other animals, in whole or in part, with the bodies of human beings. These subjects, which have furnished a popular theme for artists, may possibly be the outgrowth of the animal contests which are a favourite sport with all classes of the people.

THE GREEKS SHALL COME AGAINST THEE,  
THE CONQUEROR OF THE EAST.  
BESIDE HIM STALKS TO BATTLE  
THE HUGE EARTH-SHAKING BEAST;  
THE BEAST ON WHOM THE CASTLE  
WITH ALL ITS GUARDS DOTH STAND,  
THE BEAST WHO HATH BETWEEN HIS EYES  
THE SERPENT FOR A HAND.

—MACAULAY, “LAYS OF ANCIENT ROME”

## CHAPTER XI

# THE ELEPHANT

(Continued)

*With six tusks the elephant displays its power.  
For a thousand of years it is loyal to its master.*

LI CH'IAO, T'ang dynasty.



From a sculpture on a Jain *stūpa*

No symbology of any animal can be complete without a review of the gods for which it is the particular *vāhan* or attendant. Therefore, as the study of the lion led to the consideration of Mañjuśrī *Bodhisattva*, so the contemplation of the elephant will likewise lead to that of Samanta-bhadra *Bodhisattva*.

According to Buddhist history these two deities were the principal disciples of Sākya-muni, and were believed to be incarnations of two ancient Buddhas who appeared on earth to aid the Master in his great mission.

As Mañjuśrī's wisdom and power are symbolized by the lion, so Samanta-bhadra's love and sympathy are typified by the elephant.

This *Bodhisattva*—known to the Chinese as P'u-hsien *P'u-sa* and to the Japanese as Fugen *Bosatsu*—is the god of compassion, just as Mañjuśrī *Bodhisattva* is the god of wisdom.

The titles of *P'u-sa*, *Bosatsu*, and *Bodhisattva* have the same significance, since they are derived from *Bodhi*, meaning "intelligence," and *Sattva*, meaning "reality, vigour, and goodness," hence they refer to one who has adopted Buddhistic doctrine with great vigour.

Samanta-bhadra is the spiritual brother of Mañjuśrī, and the son of Vairocana or Dai-nichi Nyorai, of whom an illustration was given in [Chapter IX](#). He is one of a trinity of *Bodhisattva* in which

Avalokiteśvara—known to the Chinese as Kuanyin and to the Japanese as Kwannon—occupies the central position with Mañjuśrī on the left and Samanta-bhadra on the right. This trinity is worshipped in India, China, and Japan, but a special cult of Kuan-yin prevails on the island of P'u-to in eastern China near Shanghai, while Wên-shu is worshipped at Wu-t'ai-shan in Shansi province, northern China, and P'u-hsien at O-mei in Sê-chuan province, western China.

There is another group of *Bodhisattva* which, in addition to the above trinity, includes Seishi, the god of knowledge. This group is expressive of a doctrine which includes the "Pure vacancy" of Mañjuśrī; the "Withdrawal of the thought of the world of sensation" of Samanta-bhadra; the "Qualities of mercy" of Avalokitesvara; and the "Omniscience" of Seishi.

Again, in China, on a pagoda of the temple Wan-li Ch'uang, dedicated to a Ming emperor, there are stone images of four *Bodhisattva*, each having jurisdiction over one of the elements. Ti-tsang—the deity whose mission is to deliver victims from hell—presides over Earth; Wên-shu over Air; P'u-hsien over Fire, and Kuan-yin over Water.

The representations of Samanta-bhadra, as of Mañjuśrī, differ widely in all oriental countries. The deity some-times is shown as a young prince and again as an aged sage. In the former guise, arrayed in gorgeous apparel and bedecked with many jewels, wearing a royal crown, and enthroned upon a lotus thalamus—as in the Japanese painting of the Kamakura era—his appearance is more suggestive of worldly pomp and glory than of the beauty of holiness born of humility and piety. But in the latter, as shown in the painting attributed to Ma Lin of the southern Sung school, he represents the typical ascetic, unkempt and scantily clothed but spiritually poised through a consciousness of knowledge and power.



From a Japanese painting, Kamakura era. Fugen *Bosatsu*

His special emblems likewise differ and are interchangeable in the different Buddhist countries. He sometimes carries the *cintāmani* but, according to the SADDHARMA PUNDARIKA, his attribute should be the DHARMA-PARYAYA, “Sacred Scriptures,” of which he is the special custodian; for through him it has been brought to the world.





From a Japanese painting by Setsusen. *Fugen Bosatsu*

In Japan, the *Bodhisattva* generally carries this sacred *sūtra* in his hand, either in the form of a book or a scroll—the latter frequently unrolled and being read by him—or on top of a long-stemmed lotus-blossom as in the temple-painting of the Kamakura era, herewith shown. How far this emblem is used in China it is difficult to ascertain, the only example herewith given is that of the Lamā brass image, where he holds the long-stemmed lotus from which the sacred volume undoubtedly has been lost. In the painting also attributed to Ma Lin the deity holds the *jū-i* (Jap. *nyo-i*), the sacred wand which symbolizes the Power of the Faith. This is quite the reverse from the Japanese custom, where the *nyo-i* is the particular emblem of Monju *Bosatsu*, or Mañjuśrī *Bodhisattva*, as shown in the illustrations of this chapter as well as those of [Chapter VIII](#). This is very confusing, since Buddhist literature asserts that Mañjuśrī should hold in his left hand the sacred scriptures, and in his right the *khadga*, “flaming sword,” symbolizing, “As a sword cuts knots so should the intellect pierce the deepest recesses of Buddhist thought.”

Again, the *Bodhisattva* like the *Buddhas* are also represented without emblems, but with their hands posed in the mystic *mudras*, as is the case of the Chinese bronze and the Chinese lacquers here shown. The most important attribute of the *Bodhisattva* is his *vāhan*, the elephant which, as the mount of the young prince—as shown in the *Fugen Bosatsu* of the Japanese painting of the Kamakura era—is richly caparisoned and proudly stands shod with lotus blossoms; but when accompanying the aged recluse—as shown in the Chinese painting of P’u-hsien *P’u-sa* by Ma Lin—remains humbly unharnessed to correspond to the simplicity of its austere master. In India, as in the frescoes on the walls of the Ajanta caves in the north - western part of the empire, it is frequently represented white, and having six tusks. In China also, according to an inscription on a painting by Wu Tao-tzū, preserved in Japan in the temple Tōfukuji near Kyōto, this same type of elephant was used during the T’ang dynasty. A notable example of it may still be found in the temple of Wannien-szū. at O-mei, previously referred to as the place where the cult of P’u-hsien is localized. It is a colossal statue twelve feet high, made of silver bronze, with each foot of the animal as well as the figure of the *P’u-sa* supported by a bronze lotus blossom.



From a Chinese painting attributed to Ma Lin. P'u-hsien *P'u'Sa*

Again, an ancient jade in the Blackstone collection of the Field Museum, Chicago, bears an incised reproduction of a painting by Yen Li-pên of the T'ang dynasty, entitled "Brushing the Elephant of P'u-hsien," in which this form of the animal is depicted.



From a Japanese painting by Setsusen. *Monju Bosatsu*

Sometimes, as in the painting of Fugên En-myō of the Fujiwara era, belonging to the Boston Museum, this remarkable animal also has three heads, each of which possesses the six tusks.



From a Japanese painting, Kamakura era. Monju *Bosatsu*

The fabulous six tusks of the elephant have the special significance of symbolizing the six temptations, which find their channels for activity through the five mortal senses and the human will. Their origin is accounted for by several traditions. First, it is claimed that the Lord Buddha appeared on earth six times in the form of a white elephant; then again, that, just prior to the birth of Gautama, his mother, the gentle Māyā, said to her husband:



From a Chinese painting attributed to Wu Tao-tzū. Wên-shu *P'u-sa*

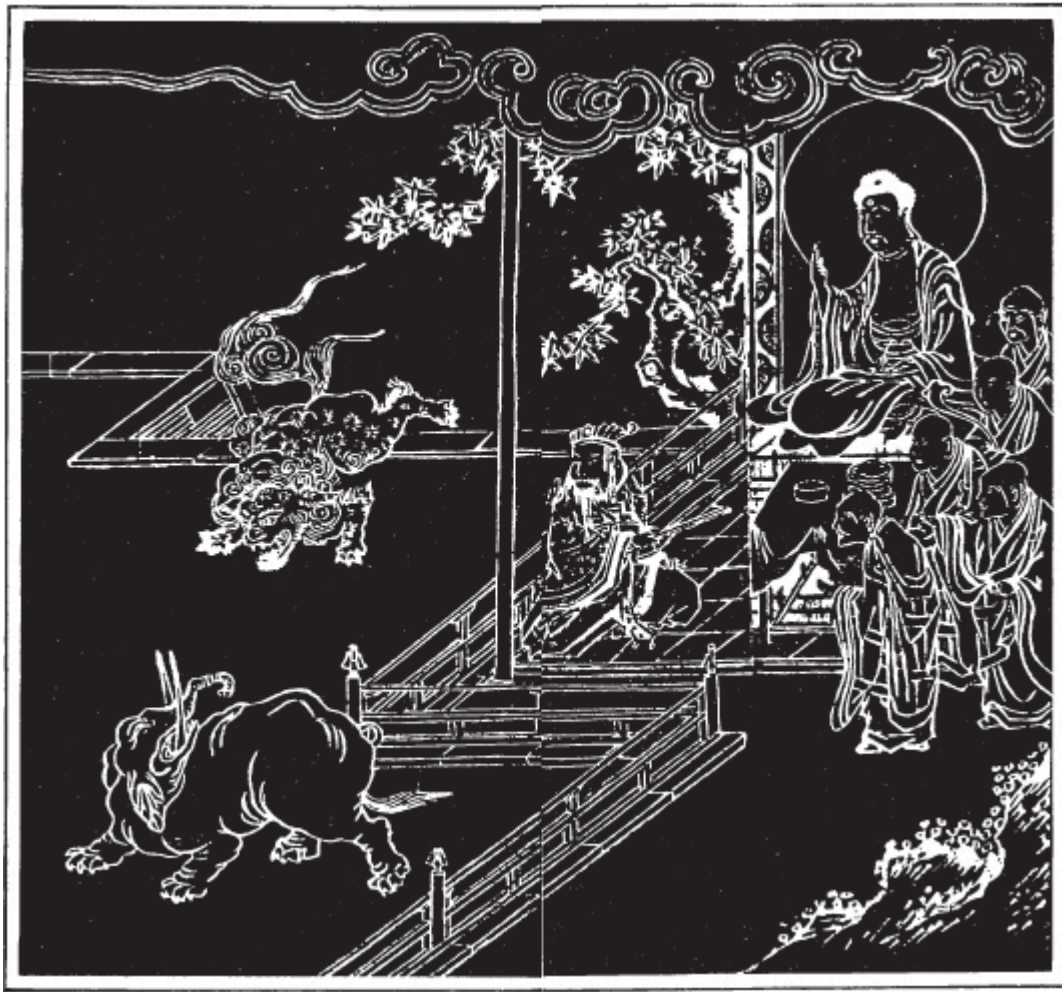
“Like snow and silver outlining the sun and moon, a white elephant with six tusks and unrivalled trunk and feet has entered my being. I beheld the three regions, earth, heaven, and hell, with a great light shining in the darkness, and myriads of spirits sang my praises in the sky.”

The principal legend connected with the Six-tusked Elephant is given in the CHHADAANTA JĀTĀKA. It relates that when the Buddha elect in one of his animal incarnations was the leader of a herd of eight thousand royal elephants, he aroused the jealousy of one of his wives by what appeared to be undue attention to another. Vowing vengeance, she prayed that she might die and be reborn to a position which would empower her to make her lord and master pay the penalty for his act.



From a Chinese bronze. Wên-shu *P'u-sa*

Being granted her wish and having become the Queen of Benares, she selected from all the hunters of the realm the one most cruel and relentless, and sent him to slay the great elephant and bring to her his tusks.

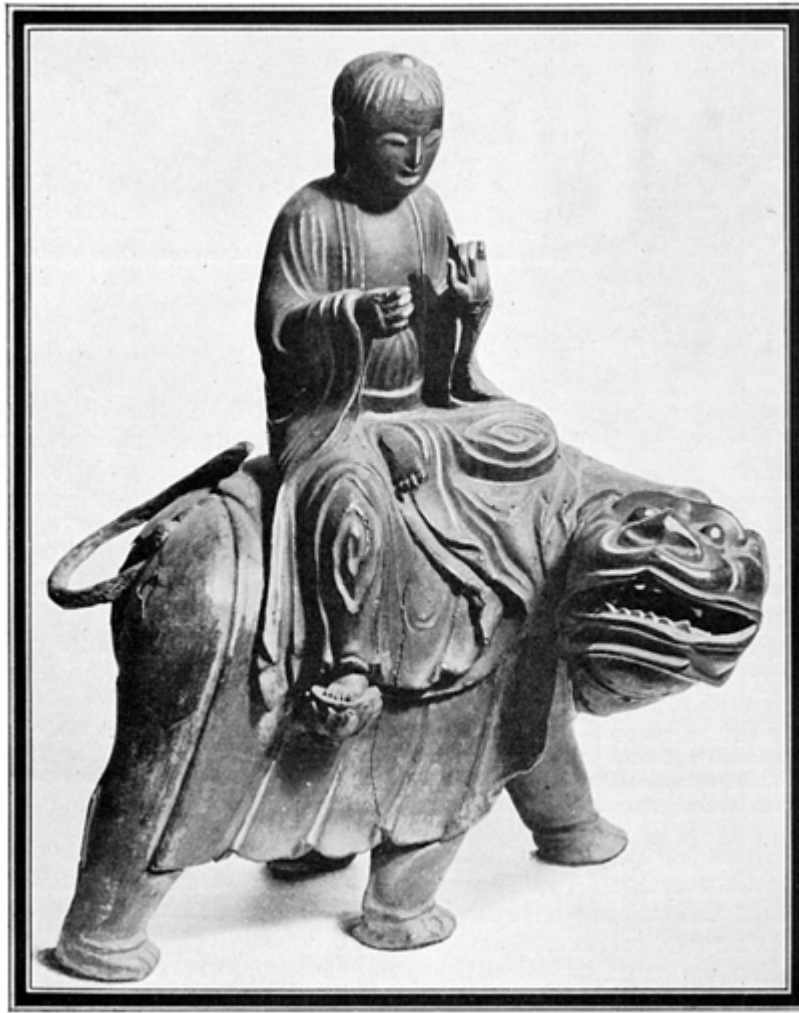


From a woodcut in an old Japanese book. The Intoxicated Elephant

The hunter, disguised in the yellow robe of priesthood, from a concealed position shot the Great Being with a poisoned arrow. The animal, at first furious from the pain he was suffering, was about to retaliate when he saw that his assailant was a priest. Then recovering his self-control he inquired the cause of the attack. Being told the truth, he understood its significance and, with the resignation of a *Bodhisattva*, he unflinchingly offered his tusks. But the hunter was unable to sever them, so the elephant with his own trunk seized the saw and cut them off, saying: after which he expired.

“The tusks of wisdom are a hundred times more dear to me than these. May this loss bring me omniscience,”





From a Chinese lacquer. Wên-shu *P'u-sa*

The hunter carried the tusks to the queen, relating his entire experience. But as she listened to his tale, the iniquity of her deed lay revealed before her and, overcome with horror and remorse, she died.

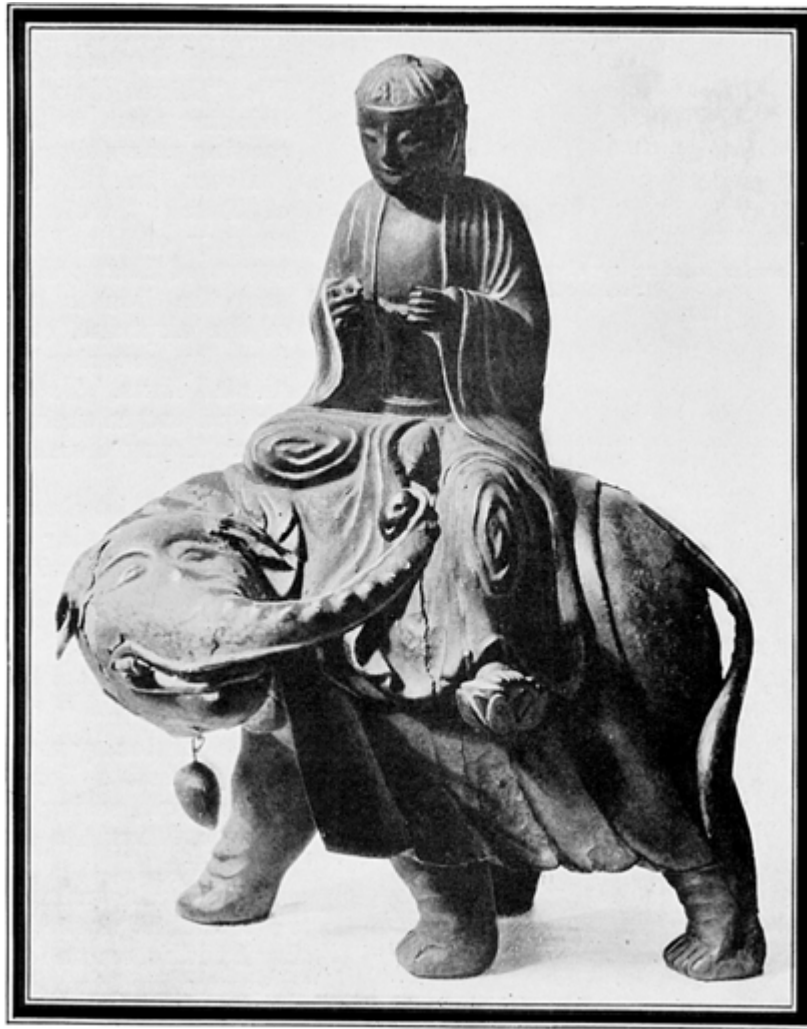


From a Tibetan brass. P'u-hsien *P'u-sa*,

Ages after, when the Great Being had come to Buddhahood and was engaged in his supreme mission, and she—the queen again reborn—as a nun, listening to his sermon, suddenly remembered the unhappy incident of the past, she wept. The Master, seeing her tears, smiled compassionately to reassure her. Then he related the wonderful story, and his hearers became so convinced of the truth of his doctrine that many were led to enter the Path, while the nun herself became an arhat.

To the elephant, therefore, are attributed the qualities of sympathy, love, gentleness, and kindness which the Buddha, in his incarnations of purification, expresses—qualities which find exemplification in innumerable legends. Among these is the following, taken from the *JĀTĀKA-MĀLĀ*, “Garland of Birth-stories.” The Great Being was once a huge elephant living in a forest remote from human habitations. One day while wandering about he heard strange noises which proved to be the lamentations of men. Desiring to learn the cause of their distress, he approached them. They, however, at sight of him, were terrified and about to flee, when he spoke to them, inquiring the cause of their trouble. Hearing a human voice emanating from a dumb brute, they, at first, were greatly startled, but the voice was so kindly and sympathetic that, upon second thought, they became assured and told him their story. They had been banished from their country and were wandering about aimlessly, not knowing whither to go, and were dying from hunger, thirst, fatigue, and sorrow. The elephant hearing their pitiful tale decided to sacrifice himself to allay their suffering, for he thus reasoned: “In their condition, without food they will perish. Let me therefore in their behalf yield this mortal self, this abode of many hundreds of illnesses, this vessel of many infirmities. May this assemblage of evils, whose name is ‘body,’ serve its ultimate purpose by alleviating the distress of others.” While thus

contemplating, some of the men, divining his real self, appealed to him for food; others for water; and still others for direction to guide them through the dreadful desert. Then the Great Being, in pity, replied: "To the west is a mountain and a lake with lotuses and pure water. There you will find the body of an elephant which has fallen from the mountain plateau. It will still be warm. Use its flesh for meat, its bowels to make bags to carry water, then proceed on your journey." Thereupon the Great Being hurried to the top of the mountain and hurled himself over the steep precipice. Meanwhile, as directed, the company finally reached the lake and found the promise fulfilled. As they looked upon the predicted remains, someone remarked: "How like our benefactor this elephant looks," suggesting that it should be given the honours of cremation due to so benign a creature. There were others, however, who, discerning the truth of the supreme sacrifice that had been made, insisted that the plan devised by the Great Being should be carried out in every detail. They therefore obeyed the injunction and were, in consequence, successful in passing through the wilderness in safety.



From a Chinese lacquer. P'u-hsien *P'u-sci*

Another well-known legend pertains to the Elephant and the Rabbit. This relates that during a forest fire a rabbit took refuge under the uplifted foot of an elephant. For six months the noble creature held his leg in this position in order to protect the little animal. The limb wasted away and caused the elephant to die, but he was reborn in the body of a king.

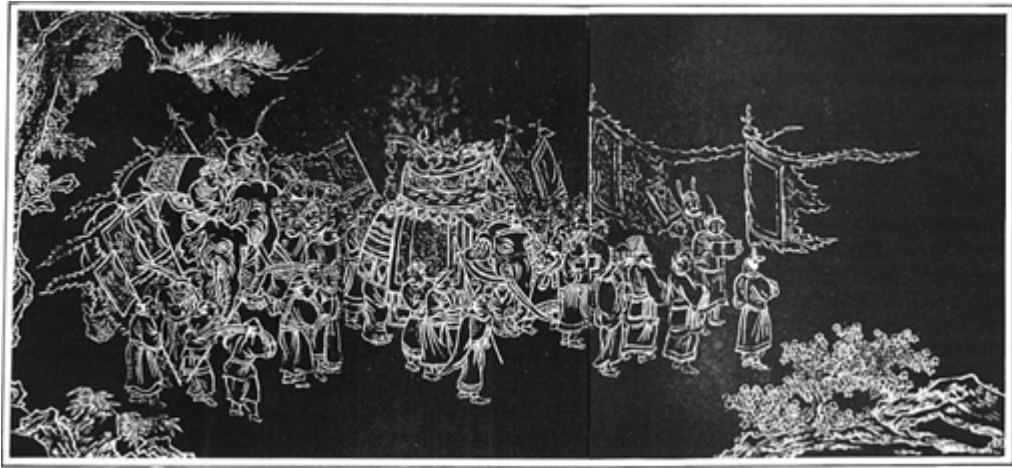
A tale about this animal, known all over the world, pertains to a powerful king of India, who, desirous of demonstrating the innumerable interpretations of religious doctrine, assembled a number

of blind men around an elephant to learn their ideas concerning it. Standing around this unusual bulky creature, each felt part of it, touching only a single part without considering it as a whole. One took hold of its trunk and at once pronounced it a snake; another handling its ear said it was a rice-basket. Another felt its body and said it was a wall; still another grasping a leg said it was a post; while another seizing the end of its tail was sure it was a broom. Each was positive in his assertion and they quarrelled. Thereupon the king told them the truth and explained that even as they had judged the elephant hastily, so people in general viewed the great truths of Buddhism.



From a painting by Shunshō. Eguchi no Kimi, the *Tayū*

The lion and the elephant have from time immemorial been coupled in the arts; first on account of the natural warfare that existed between them, and later because of their inherent qualities of wisdom and strength in one and of love and mercy in the other, which the Buddhists used as examples of virtue to be emulated by their faithful followers.



From a woodcut by Hogan Shuzan. Bringing the Elephant Tribute from Annam to China

That the elephant was conscious of the superior power of the lion is most evident from the fear which he ever entertained of him. Pertaining to this, there are many legends. One is given in the YÜAN HSIÉH which relates that, upon one occasion, an emperor caused a panic among the Imperial elephants by ordering the dancers who were to perform the *Shih-tzū Wu*, "Lions' Dance," to be dressed in imitation of lions. The elephants, thinking them to be real animals, became terror-stricken and stampeded, causing many lives to be lost.

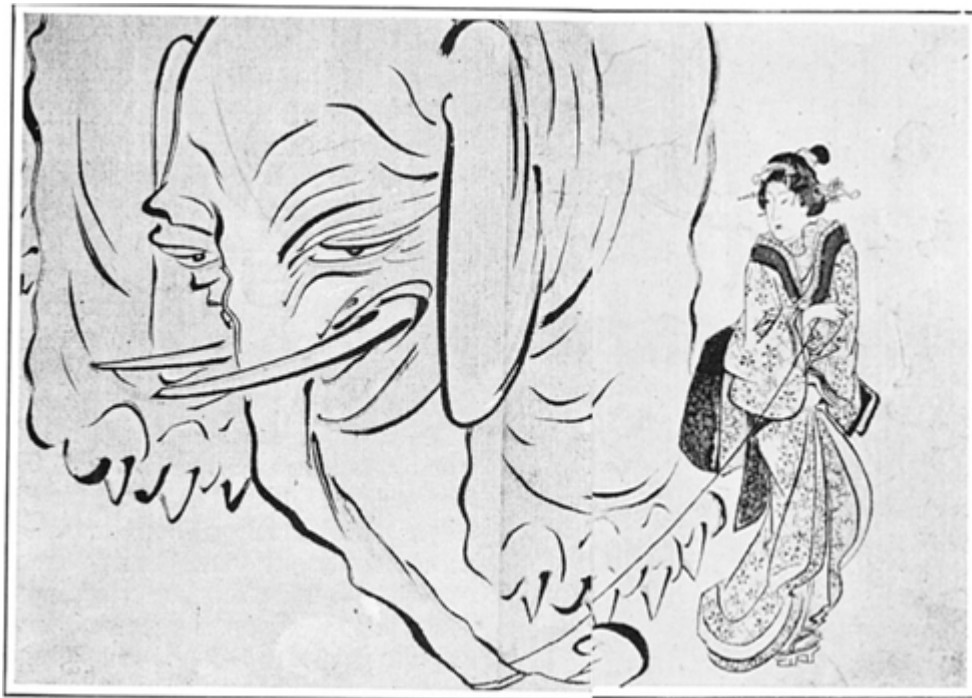


From a woodcut by Eitaku. The *Tayū*

Again, in the SITNG-SHÜ, it is related that a general by the name of Tsung Chüeh was sent to attack the southern barbarians in the country of Lin Yi. The barbarians used elephant troops, which the horses of Tsung Chüeh could not resist. The general, however, knowing that the lion is a formidable foe of the elephant, effected a camouflage by covering his horses with artificial lions. The elephants were deceived and in their fright ran away, leaving Tsung Chüeh in possession of the field.

The Buddhist classics also contain a legend of similar nature, entitled the *Sui Zō*, "Intoxicated Elephant," of which an illustration is herein given. In this it is stated that Ajasco, an enemy of Buddha, wishing to test the divinity of the deity, sent this man-slaying *Sui Zō* against him, but the Master by means of his mystic power caused a lion to appear, and the elephant, seeing his enemy, fled in terror, filling the air with his wild trumpeting.

A similar legend relates that Mārā, the Buddhist Satan, also desiring to slay Buddha, sent a ferocious elephant to overcome him. "The Venerable One, however, infused a sense of love into the beast. The elephant thereupon extended his trunk and taking the dust from off the feet of the Venerable One sprinkled it over his own head and retired backwards, bowing and gazing on the Venerable One."



From a woodcut by Hiroshige. The *Tayū*

It is, however, the spiritual relationship of the two creatures and their co-operative service to Buddhism which is of special interest. For in this is found the *vāhan* not only of the *Bodhisattva* but of Buddha himself, where frequently two of each harmoniously support his throne.

An interesting Japanese legend of Buddhistic import and associated with Fugen *Bosatsu* is that pertaining to Eguchi no Kimi, a famous courtesan known as the *Tayū*, "The Magnanimous One," who lived about seven centuries ago. She is generally shown on an elephant reading the sacred scriptures after the manner of the *Bosatsu*, as given in the accompanying illustrations.



From a painting by Goshun. The Poet Saigyō and the *Tayū*

She was discovered by the poet-priest, Saigyō Hōshi, who while on his wanderings sought alms at her door. Fearing her hospitality might defame him, she refused him entrance. He was, however, not to be turned away, for, hoping to make a convert, he drew her into conversation, and so profound was her knowledge that he recognized her as an incarnation of Fugên *Bosatsu*.

Another version is that while the bonze was on one of his mendicant journeys, she appeared to him in the heavens. In the accompanying reproduction of the painting by Goshun, the priest is shown paying his devotions to her; for he realized that she, like himself, was making a supreme sacrifice for the benefit of humanity. He could discern that her present incarnation had been chosen for the purpose of learning the trials and tribulations of her class that she might bring them relief.

The *Tayū*, although a woman of the underworld, is traditionally known as a character of great generosity and nobility. In the accompanying reproduction of the painting by Shunshō, she is revealed through clouds of incense which possessed the magic power of revealing the image of one beloved. On this painting is an inscription by Chikage, commenting on the vain illusion of worldly attachments and their attendant consequences; and in the painting by Goshun she is shown seated on the six-tusked white elephant emerging from the clouds, to the bewilderment of the priest.





From a painting by Kason. The *Tayū*

The association of the elephant with Buddha is said to have a zodiacal significance, inasmuch as Gautama was born under the sign of the elephant; while, again, it is claimed that the divine creature first appeared to the Great Being immediately following his Attainment of Enlightenment.

In India the animal is so reverently regarded by some of the followers of Buddha that in its presence they feel they are entertaining the Master himself, hence they whisper their supplications into its ear. Even the hair of its tail is regarded as a potent amulet, for when the elephant passes along the road its footprints are patted to the accompaniment of the ditty: "Give us a hair, O Elephant, for 'tis like a sword of gold."

The principal elephant of Indian lore is Airāvata, the mount of Indra, the thousand-eyed rain-cloud god, the very elephant that was sacrificed to provide a head for Ganesha referred to in the preceding chapter. It is said to have been produced from the Churning of the Ocean, and to possess a trunk in the form of a waterspout. It is regarded as the prototype of the elephant race, and is variously called the Elephant of the Clouds, Brother of the Sun, and the Fighting Elephant. It appeared to the god as one of the *Diggajas*—Eight Elephants which guard the Eight Points of the Compass—and had dominion over the East, the other Directions being respectively protected by Pundarika, Vamana, Kumuda, Anjanā, Pushpadanta, Sarva-bhama, and Supratipa.

Another celebrated elephant is the mighty creature two hundred and sixty leagues high, which Mārā rode in his effort to dislodge the Great Being while meditating under the *Bodhi* Tree.

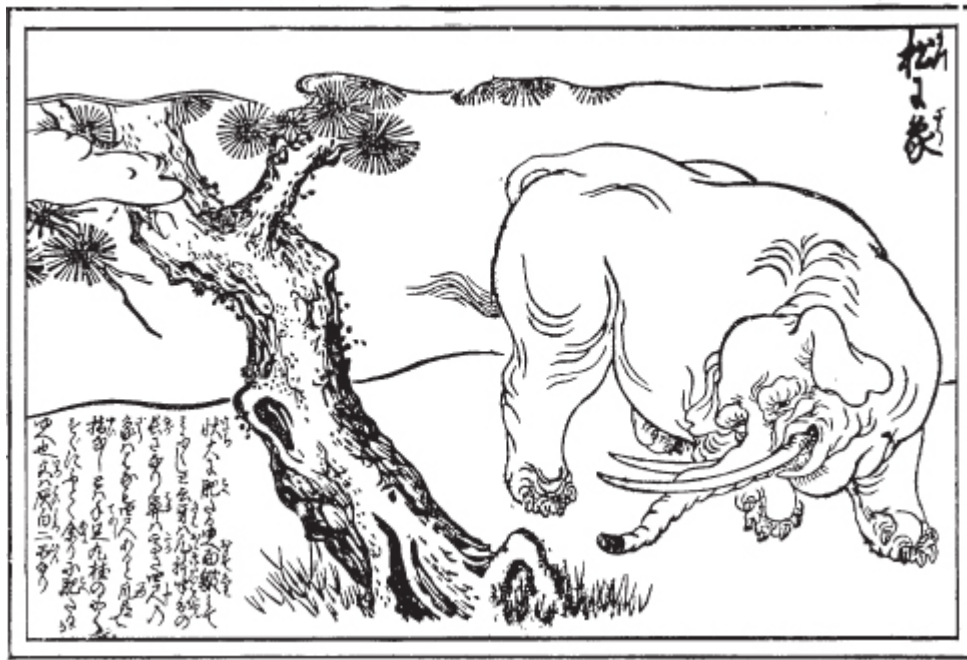
Another deity of which the elephant is the *vāhan* is Kangosattva, also known as Vajrāsattva, where the mount may consist of from one to four animals. The Hindu god, Krishna, also sometimes rides the great mammal, as likewise does the personification of the planet Jupiter, in the Indian calendar.

It is also associated with Mahākāla, who, as one of the manifestations of the Eight Terrible Ones, wages war against all enemies of Buddhism. This god is shown treading upon one or two prostrate elephants.

It is also represented with Lakshmī, the Aphrodite who rose radiant and glorious from the Hindu Sea of Milk. This goddess, who is sometimes spoken of as the mother of the world, is popularly known as the goddess of fortune and prosperity. In fact, when adversity overtakes a Hindu he feels that he has been forsaken by Lakshmī. It is related that when she was born “the Ganges and other sacred streams followed her, and the heavenly elephants took up pure water in golden vessels and poured it upon her.”

This episode is a common theme of Indian art. The goddess is generally shown in the centre of a symmetrical composition, while on each side an elephant pours water over her head. Its best known portrayal may be found at Polonnaruwa in Ceylon, in the celebrated *Gal-pota*, “Stone Book,” an imposing monolith nearly twenty feet long.

In a survey of the arts of India, Ceylon, Siam, and adjacent countries where Buddhism prevails, the elephant is seen not only with spiritual import, in relation to deities, but with architectural significance, where, in great numbers, in monumental structures its form supplies the demand for a mighty base. Its weighty dignity and burden-bearing possibilities so impressed these early races that they invented a myth which relates that the earth rests on the backs of four elephants which, in turn, stand on a tortoise. It would therefore appear that the supreme office of this noble beast is none other than that of the *vcihan* of the earth itself; and, even as the lotus blossom maintains the immutable attitude of the Buddha, so the elephant sustains this planet in its eternal passage through the heavens.



From a woodcut by Morikuni

## CHAPTER XII

### THE BULL

*Slowly trudges the bullock,  
Patiently wending his way;  
Calmly sits the rider,  
Dreaming of life, all day.*



From a painting by Kakunen

THE particular species of the *Bovidae* genus shown in the arts of the Orient consists chiefly of the water-buffalo, an animal having a humped back. In China it is known as *niu* and in Japan as *ushi*. *Niu*, if properly pronounced, according to Confucius, sounds like the cry of the animal, while, again, the character by which it is written is intended to be a picture of the animal.

In both China and Japan the bullock has been used mainly as a beast of burden, performing every duty required of the horse in the Western world, except that pertaining to warfare. Japanese history, however, records an event in which it was so utilized. This occurred during the wars of the Genji and Heike, when Yoshinaka, one of Yoritomo's generals, won an important victory at the battle of Kurikara by tying blazing torches to the horns of a herd of bullocks and driving them into the enemy's ranks. The cattle themselves were so terrified by this blaze of fire that they stampeded, forcing the foe backward to certain death over a steep precipice on Mount Siwo.

The bull of the Orient appears to be of much milder disposition than its occidental counterpart. Hence the need for oxen has never been felt. It has never been used in such amusements as bullfights, although similar sports are said to take place in several outlying districts of Japan. There the contest, however, appears to be a mere trial of strength by which one bullock pushes the other out of the ring, and although their horns may become interlocked, neither the animals nor their attendants are ever injured.

In all representations of the animal, it appears as ploughing the fields, cultivating the rice plants, drawing lumbering carts, or being ridden as a steed. In this latter capacity it has inspired many a theme for painters and sculptors, but the principal one is "The Boy and the Bull," taken from a Chinese allegorical poem, translated by Prof. K. Wadagaki and illustrated by Sempō. It was known as *Shih Niu Chih Sung*, "The Song of the Bulls," and was originally written by Tse-kung Ch'uan Shih, and illustrated by Ching-chu Ch'an Shih, both of the Sung dynasty (960–1278). Its purpose was to

express the fundamentals of the *Zen* sect of Buddhism. The Japanese call it *Jū Gu*, “Ten Bulls,” since it defines the ten steps which the human soul must take in its endeavours to attain righteousness.

This classic Buddhist metaphor aims to show that there are dominant human qualities which have the potentiality for either good or evil. If understood and properly used, they will carry man onward and upward, but if uncontrolled, having horns like the bulls, they will turn upon their victim and rend him to destruction. Illustrative of this there is a legend of an ignorant herd-boy whose impatience angered his ten bulls. He consequently lost control of them and they fled into the sea. In their mad dash he passed a wise man who showed him how to quiet and appease the creatures so that they became quiet, gentle, and submissive, changing from being his master to becoming his willing servants.



1. The Search for the Bull



2. The Discovery of the Footprints



3. The Sight of the Bull



4. Seizing the Bull



5. Feeding the Bull

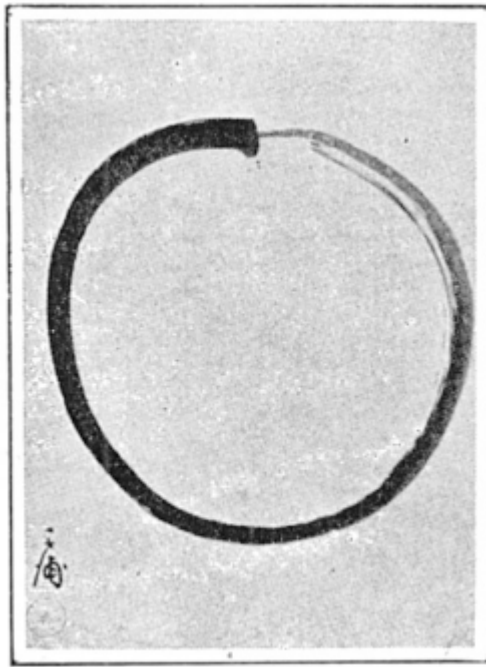


6. Riding the Bull

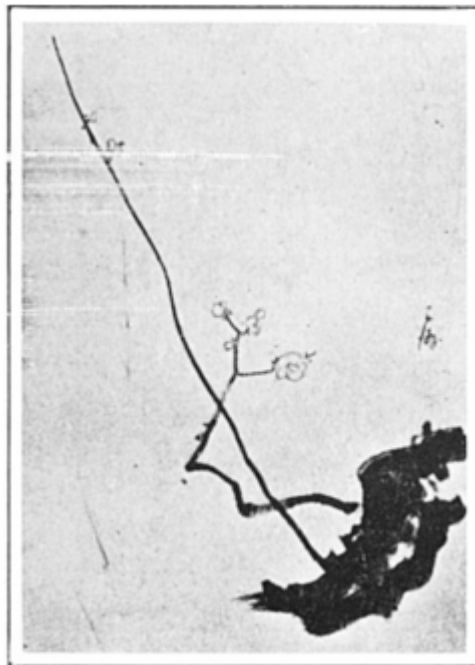


7. Forgetting the Bull





8. Forgetting the Moon and Self



9. Back to the Origin



10. In the World

FROM BLACK AND WHITE DRAWINGS BY SEMPŌ: THE SONG OF THE TEN BULLS

1.  
Firm is the boy's resolve;  
He climbs the hill in search of the Bull,  
But all in vain!  
The cries of the Cicadas fill the air.
2.  
He redoubles his courage,  
He'll not falter, nor retreat;  
At last he finds on the ground  
Footprints of the Bull.
3.  
Encouraged by this,  
Onward he pursues his way,  
And by the side of a Hill  
He catches sight of the Bull.
4.  
The Bull he seizes,  
Tries to lead him on;  
But how ferocious the brute!  
And he how powerless!
5.  
Grasses soft and waters sweet  
To the captive he offers,  
And the brute, so wild before,  
Now quietly follows the boy.
6.  
Though not pompously clad,

Proudly rides he on the Bull's back,  
And, playing upon his flute,  
Homeward he wends his way.

7.

But now the Bull disappears,  
A solemn stillness reigns,  
The night advances fast,  
And lo! the moon shines bright.

8.

The Bull exists no more,  
The Moon exists no more,  
The Self exists no more,  
'Tis only Nothingness that is.

9.

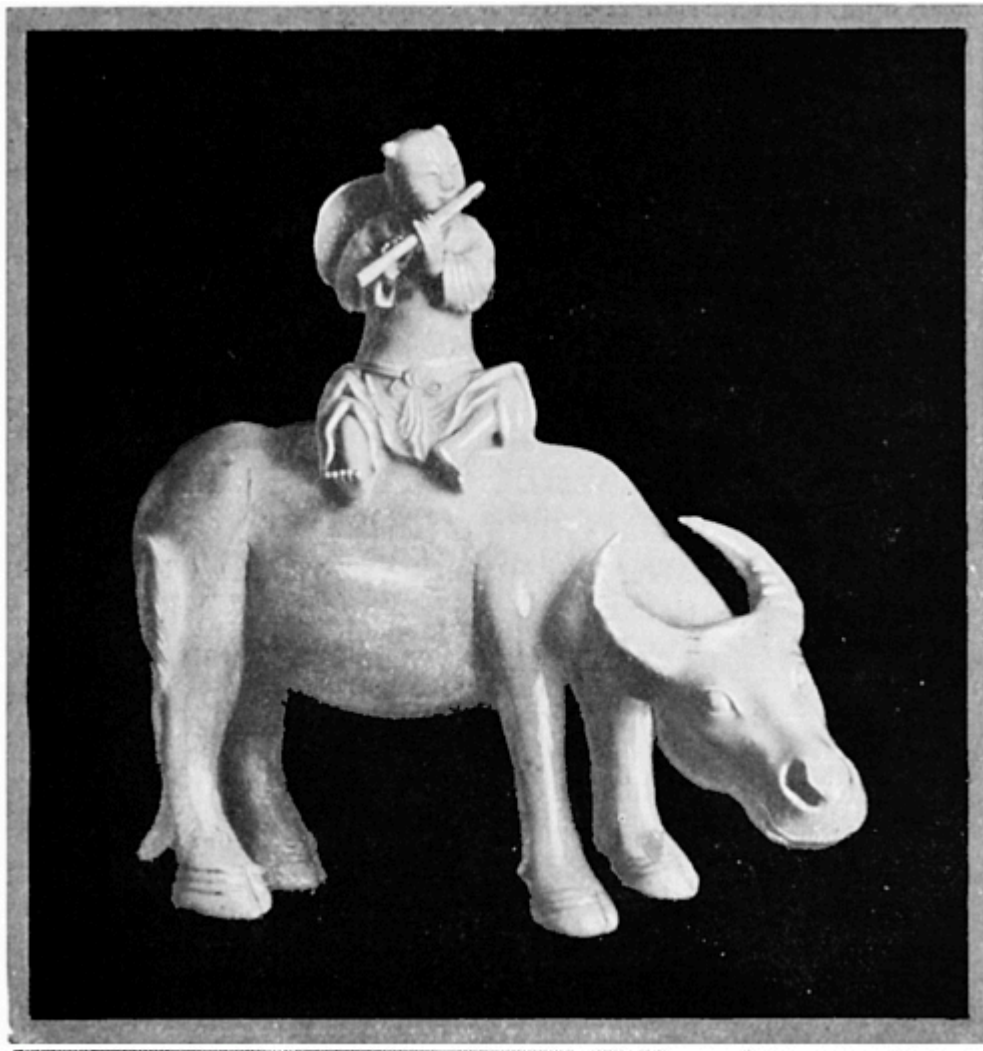
He now is wide awake,  
His mind broadens,  
All things please him,  
Spring, with its birds and flowers, has come.

10.

The Eternal Way  
Personified by the Wise—  
The Heart that loves—  
Reveals itself to Man.

Then, in the full consciousness of his knowledge and power, revelling in the joy of his possession, he wends his homeward way playing his flute. No longer is he allured by carnal desires and worldly ambitions, but in peace and tranquillity he pipes the melody of life.

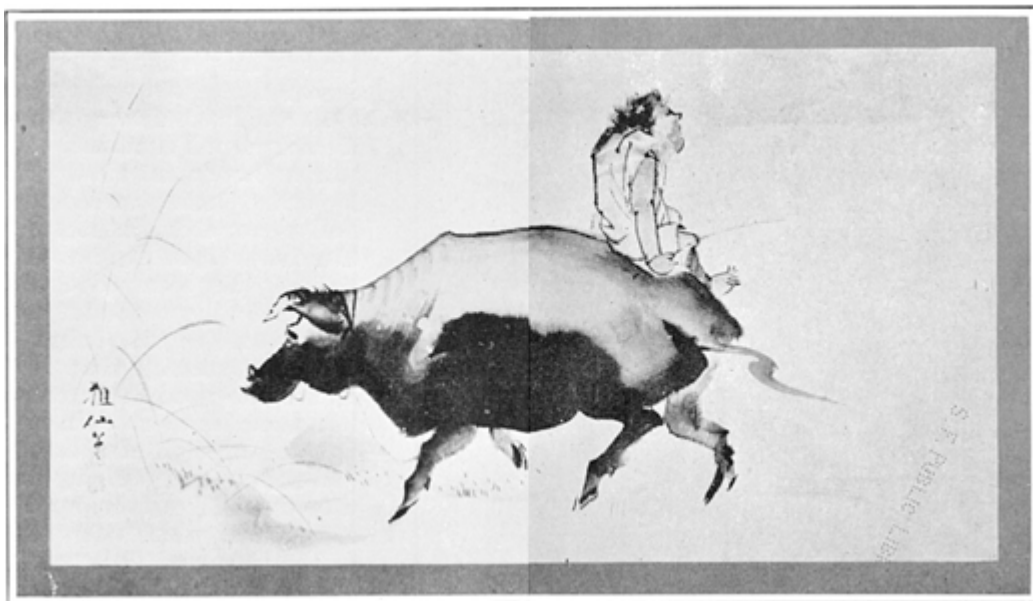
But now, with the acquisition of self-realization and the understanding that salvation is from within, not only does the Bull disappear but also the moon; and, what is most surprising, the mortal Self, thus demonstrating one of the fundamental tenets of *Zen*—the unreality of the phenomenal world.



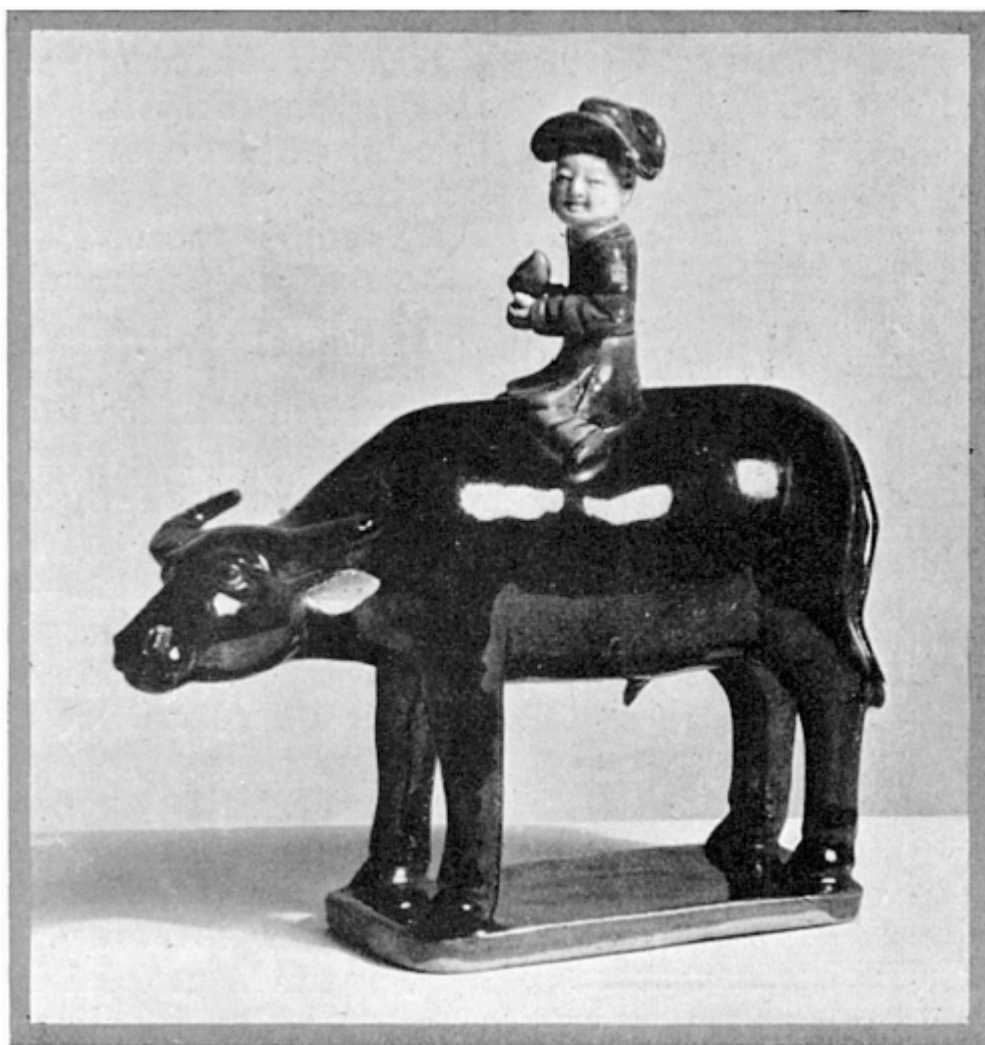
From a Chinese porcelain. The Boy and the Bull

The poem begins, as the boy, with his realization of a lack of the know-ledge of the true Self, symbolized by the Bull, goes in search of it. Then, undaunted by the obstacles which invade his path, he pursues the quest and is rewarded by the discovery of the footprints of the Bull—which are significant of the means by which he is to seek his attainment.

Then, true to his purpose, he follows the tracks of the Bull—symbolized by his study of the sacred scriptures and the heeding of the “still small voice within”—for which he is rewarded by a glimpse of the Bull itself. Having found the object of his quest, he seizes it. But it is ferocious—signifying that he finds himself confronted with the sordid doubts and moral struggles which ever beset the awakening soul. He is, however, determined to overcome any temptation which may come to him, so he not only pacifies, but masters the Bull by feeding it—which means that through the practice of austerity and contemplation he becomes freed from the domination of the laws governing the physical world.



From a Japanese painting by Sōsen. The Boy and the Bull



From a Chinese porcelain. Lao Tzu as the Boy on the Bull

With this consciousness, he is fully awake. He has come to enlightenment and returned to his origin. He has reached *Nīrvana*; but this after all is not his goal, for from its lofty heights he sees struggling humanity. Hence, with the Heart that Loves, he resolves to return to the world he once renounced so that he may bring to the suffering the blessings of the knowledge of the Eternal Way. Then, while rendering to man-kind the Supreme Service, he learns that his own infinite Self may best be found in the lives of other selves.



From a Japanese painting by Tanryō. The Philosopher Adrift

The accompanying illustrations of the above poem not only represent it in the simple, restrained, and beautiful art of the Orient, but offer a valuable assistance in the interpretation of the allegory.

Besides this boy, who is so often shown riding the bullock, there are several other personages associated with the animal.

The principal personages associated with the animal, is Lao Tzū, China's venerable founder of Taoism. In the different illustrations here given of "Lao Tzū on the Bull," the aged philosopher is represented leaving Loh in the province of Chou, the capital of the Chou dynasty, because he could not endure the political and social corruption which then prevailed. Of this departure, it is related that the governor of the city, feeling that the sage would never return, detained him, requesting that he leave behind some writing of his doctrine. In compliance therewith, the sage spent the night in writing

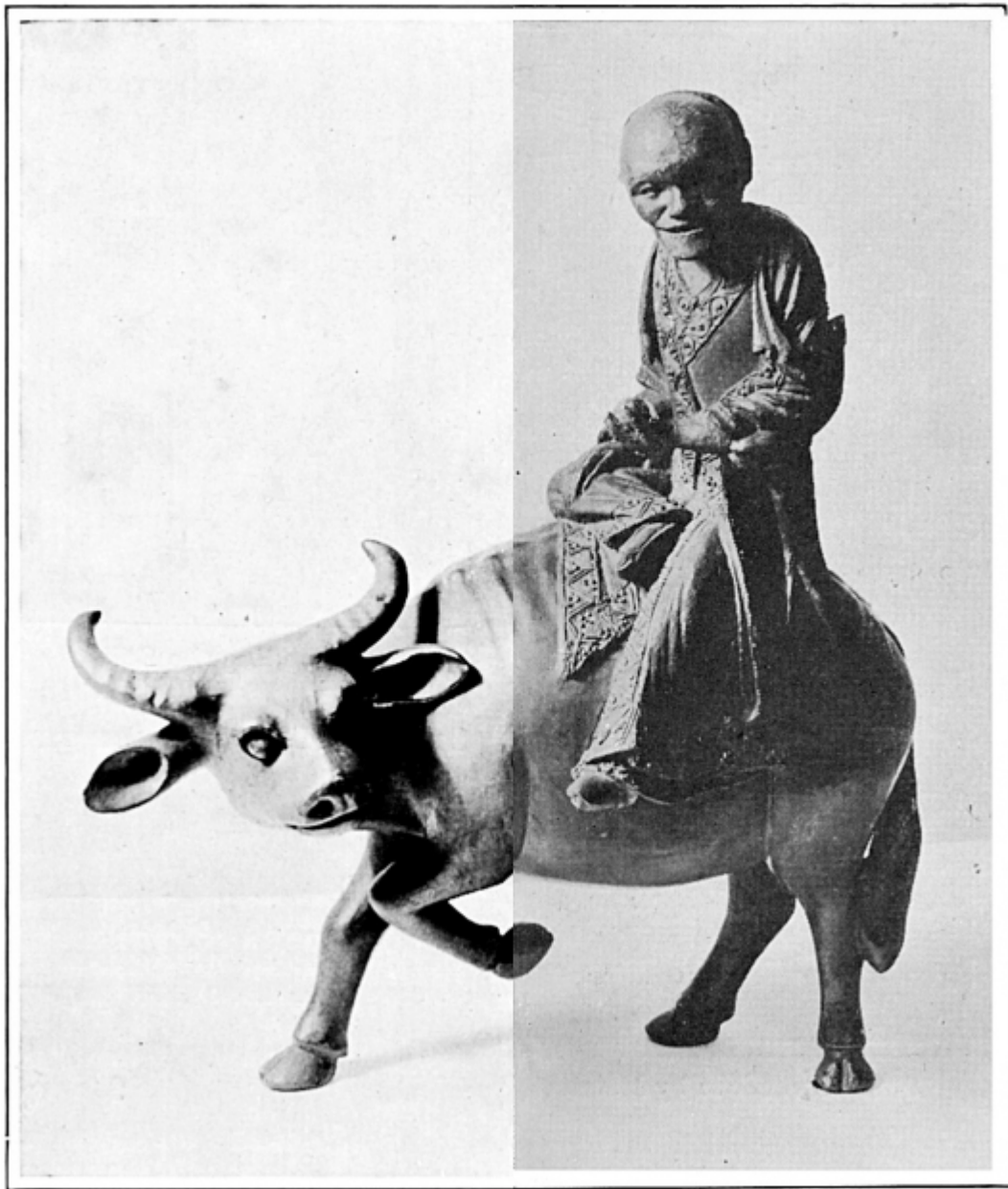
the classics of TAO TÊ CHING and was allowed to proceed the next morning. According to the records, he travelled to the West on a blue cow and never was heard of again.



From a coloured woodcut by Kyōsai. Daikoku Impersonating the *Sennin Chōkwarō*

In an accompanying reproduction of a Chinese painting entitled “Ning Ch’i Riding a Bullock” is given a very beautiful composition by Yen Tz’u-ping of the South Sung school, which illustrates a legend quite typical of those so commonly related about Chinese officials. Ning Ch’i—according to tradition—lived in the seventh century B.C. He was a very poor but ambitious poet, who rode about the country on a cow, beating time on the animal’s horns as he recited his song bewailing his misfortune. Huang Kung, the lord of Ch’i, hearing about this eccentric man, sent for him and, finding him extraordinarily learned, made him Prime Minister, with the result that the country enjoyed peace and prosperity.





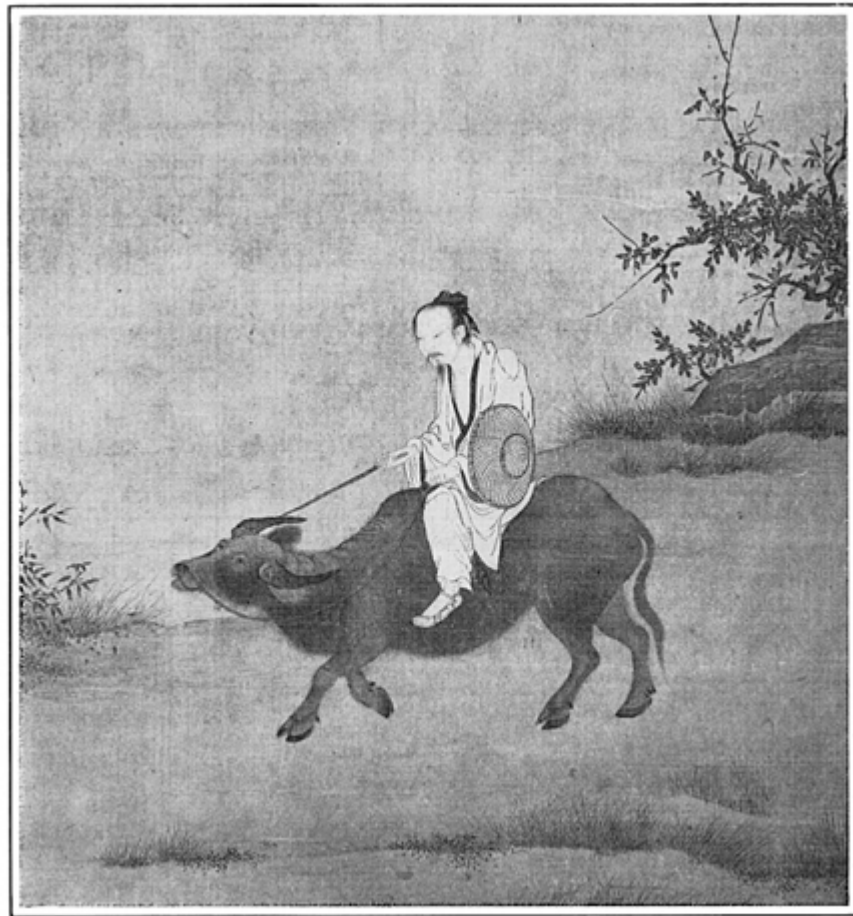
From a Chinese lacquer. Lao Tzū on His Bull

Sugawara no Michizane—the Japanese statesman and scholar familiar to every schoolboy in Japan as Tenjin, the god of calligraphy and learning—is also depicted riding this animal, as shown in the colour wood-cut by Hiroshige. It is related of him that while in Kyūshū, whither in A.D. 901 he had been banished through some court intrigue, he always rode a black bullock in his goings about the island. Immediately following his death, the country, particularly in the region of the capital, was visited by storms, floods, and earthquakes, all of which were attributed to Michizane, whom the people declared had become transformed into the god of thunder. So to propitiate him, temples for his worship were erected, and in front of each a large bronze bullock was set up. Then, when this image collected dew, the people said “Tenjin has been out for a ride during the night,” for in the dew they beheld the sweat of the animal. From that time the bullock in a reclining position has ever been emblematic of Tenjin.



From a Japanese painting by Gekkō. The Young Nature-Lover

Another personage shown riding a bullock is Shōhaku, also called Botankwa, from his admiration of peonies. He was a priest of noble descent and a great lover of poetry and the beauties of nature. He habitually rode a bullock having gilded horns decorated with peonies and always sat on the animal facing its tail, reading, regardless of the laughter his strange appearance provoked.



From a Chinese painting by Yen Tz'u-ping. Ning Ch'i Riding a Bullock

Two Chinese sages, Hū Yeh, adviser of the Emperor Yao (2357 B.C.), and his companion Ch'ao Fu, are generally shown riding bullocks. They are regarded as examples of the ability to resist temptation. Of Hū Yeh it is related that when his master suggested the idea of abdicating the throne in his favour, he ran to the nearest waterfall and washed his ears so that the pollution of ambition, incurred by even listening to such an idea, should not defile him. Ch'ao Fu, observing his companion's actions and learning the cause, not only washed his ears and eyes of the taint, but seeing this animal drinking from the brook below the waterfall, led it away from the morally infected water.

In China it was not unusual to place an image of a bullock or an ox before a palace as in the case of the bronze ox which appears to guard the Imperial Summer Palace at K'unming Hu, a lake near Peking. This image bears a poetical inscription to the effect that it was erected by the Emperor Ch'ien Lung, following the example of the ancient Yü, the founder of the Hsia dynasty (2205–1767 B.C.). Through his propitiation of the sacred ox—which was a constellation of the zodiac as well as a queller of dragons and river monsters—this wise ruler was enabled to carry off the waters of the great flood. In gratitude for this he erected the image of this divine creature, so that it might guard and protect all the irrigating channels he had constructed for the relief of his people.



From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige. Sugawara no Michizane Riding His Black Bullock

The ox as the chief agricultural animal has not only been sacred from the earliest times, but in very recent times was given a very prominent place in the rustic spring ceremonial.



From a woodcut by Utamaro. The Herdsman and the Weaver

Daikoku, the god of wealth, one of the Japanese Seven Gods of Happiness, is also represented riding a bullock, but only when he is shown as the god of agriculture, as which he is worshipped by farmers. In the accompanying illustration of a parody by Kyōsai—mounted on his bovine steed, led by Okame, the goddess of folly—he is made to impersonate Chōkwarō riding a bullock. But the horse, which the *sennin* generally conjures from a gourd, happens also to be a bullock and ridden by Fukurokuju, the god of longevity.

Another personage associated with the bullock is Kidōmaru, also known as Hakamadare Yasusuke, who, seeking to avenge his father's death at the hands of Yorimitsu, lay in waiting for the great general as he was passing on his way to the Kurama-yama temple. But the bullock's hide covering Kidōmaru could not be manipulated on account of Yorimitsu's retainers and the venture proved to be a failure. Hokusai particularly enjoyed representing the warrior lying on the field of Ichiharano, disguised as a bullock.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Herdsman and the Weaver

An ox-headed demon by the name of Gozu, of Hindu tradition, figures in Japanese folk-lore in connection with the *Go Sekku*, five principal festivals of the seasons of the year; but he is rarely, if ever, illustrated in art.





From a Japanese lacquer, Chih Niu, the Weaver

The origin of these festivals is accounted for by the following weird legend which relates a story of the ox-headed incarnation of Buddha who was sent to earth to govern India. It appears, however, on account of his forbidding personality he had great difficulty in procuring a wife, until advised by a bird with a dove-like voice to seek the daughter of the dragon king in the Southern Seas. Following the bird's directions, he travelled thousands of miles, arriving at the palace of the king of Kotari, the ruler of southern India. The latter, how-ever, shocked at the uncanny appearance of his visitor, refused him entrance. Very much angered, he continued his journey, and was not only well received by the dragon king but succeeded in winning the favour of the daughter. The marriage ceremony was performed with great splendour and everybody was happy; but when the honeymoon was over, he returned to Kotari, and not only set about killing the entire tribe, but tore the body of the king into five pieces and offered each part as a Sacrifice to each of the five seasons, the *Go Sekku*. According to the legend, among other things, the red and white rice cakes used at the second festival represent his flesh and bones; the rice cakes steamed in bamboo leaves, at the third festival, his hair; the vermicelli partaken of at the fourth festival, his arteries; and the chrysanthemum *saké* drunk at the last festival, the blood of his liver.





From a woodcut by Utamaro. Crossing the Bridge of Magpies



From a Japanese lacquer. Ch'ien Niu, the Herdsman

The bullock is frequently found in connection with the celebration of festivals, when it is ridden by the participants. In the *Bon*, often referred to as the Feast of Lanterns, occurring in July—the festival at which the spirits of dead ancestors make their annual visit—the departed are supposed to return on a horse or a bullock. Hence, for the accommodation of any recently deceased member of the family, a toy animal—made of an egg-plant propped on four sticks to represent the legs of the animal—is placed at a short distance from the house so that the ghost may ride in.

There is an old-time festival known as *Ushi Matsuri*, “Bullock Festival,” celebrated in autumn, at the Koryūji, near Kyōto, which has the nature of a comedy, as it is intended to cause merriment. It occurs at midnight, when a man, impersonating the god, Mandara-jin, rides “a black bullock on a dark night.” He reads a burlesque testament by the light of a single candle, all others as well as all fires having been extinguished. This ceremony is said to expel all the evil influences which generate calamities. From this festival has come the well-known proverb, *Kumyami ni ushi*, “as clear as a black bullock on a dark night.” Another popular proverb related to this animal is *Ushi ni hikarete Zenkoji-mairi*, or “To be led to the Zenkoji temple by a cow.” It refers to an old legend of a cow that ran away with a cloth belonging to a wicked old woman, who pursued the creature until it led her to the very

temple gates. There Buddha appeared to her, and softening her heart, not only converted her, but restored the cloth to her. The proverb means, "To be forced to do good deeds."

But of all the festivals in which the bullock takes a part, that of *Tanabata* is the most important. This celebrates the beautiful "Romance of the Milky Way," a star-myth of Chinese origin in which Ch'ien Niu (Jap. Kengyū), "The Cowherd," a star in the constellation of Aquila, and Chih Niu (Jap. Shokujō), "The Weaving Lady," a star in the constellation of Lyra, are made to impersonate two lovers.

According to the legend, the maiden, a daughter of the great god of the firmament, happily spent her time weaving garments for the heavenly hosts, until a youth leading a bullock chanced by and, true to life, she fell in love with him. The father, divining her secret and wishing to reward her for her devotion to her work, gave the herdsman to her for a husband. But the young couple became so wrapt up in each other that they neglected their respective duties. She forgot her loom and he his bullock. This displeased the god, and he forthwith sentenced them to live apart, by placing the husband on the opposite side of the Milky Way. The unhappy couple were permitted to see each other but once a year. This occurred on the seventh night of the seventh moon, when the magpies with spread wings bridged the Celestial Stream so that Ch'ien Niu might visit his wife. This was possible, however, only when the skies were clear, for if it rained, the River of Heaven would rise and prevent the birds from forming a bridge. Sometimes the lovers would be separated for three or four years at a time, but their devotion never flagged, and they were ever faithful while they patiently waited for their reunion.

Another version of this myth relates that two mortals, who had been married in their teens, lived to a great age. The husband's name was Isshi and the wife's Kakuyo. Their chief pastime was gazing at the moon. When the wife was ninety-nine years old she died, and her spirit, ascending to heaven on a magpie, became a star. The lonely husband had naught left to console him but the moon. One evening while enjoying its beauty, Kakuyo paid him a visit and related to him the wonderful experiences of her new life. From this time Isshi thought only of also becoming a star. At last, when he was in his one hundred and third year, he died, and his spirit, riding a crow, went to join his wife. But he met with disappointment, for he was not permitted to cross the great River of Heaven, because T'ien Ta, the great god of the firmament, daily bathed in its waters. There was, however, one day in the year when the god went to Zen-Hōdō to hear the preaching of the gospel of Buddha. This was the seventh day of the seventh month. Then the magpies and crows, seeing the plight of the two stars and taking pity upon them, with their bodies and wings built a bridge for the lovers to cross to each other.

There is also a Chinese story in which Chang Ch'ien was sent by the Emperor Han Wu Ti to find the source of the Yellow River, which was thought to rise in the Milky Way. At length, after months and months of travel, he came to the banks of a stream whose waters were as glowing as a silver light. Here, in a pavilion, he saw a beautiful young woman weaving, while on the shore beyond he beheld a young herdsman leading a bullock. He asked the young woman the name of the river, whereupon she gave him a shuttle and told him to carry it to Chun P'ing, the star-gazer, who would be able to answer his question. So the voyager, returning to his native land, sought the wise man for the solution of his strange adventure.

Chun P'ing consulted his records and informed Chang Ch'ien that at the very hour when he received the shuttle—which was at four in the morning on the seventh night of the seventh moon—a strange star appeared between Ch'ien Niu and Chih Niu. Thereupon Chang Ch'ien knew that he not only had sailed on the Celestial Stream but had gazed into the eyes of the Heavenly Weaver. Great was then his dismay to realize that having been with the immortals he had failed to procure the Elixir of Life.

This legend has been commemorated in Japan, in a festival known as *Tanabata*. It was first celebrated in A.D. 755, but then only by the court, when it was known as the *Hoshi Matsuri*, "Star Festival." Not until the Tokugawa Shōgunate did it become a national holiday, at which time it flourished in all its glory. Now it is little observed except in country districts.

Descriptions of the festival as anciently celebrated relates that in addition to food offerings made to the star-deities, rice-wine, incense, flowers, a harp and flute, and a five-eyed needle threaded with five

different colours—significant of the five colours flashed by the two stars—were placed on four tables. Beside these were arranged black lacquer oil-lamps to illuminate the feast.

At another place on the grounds a tub of water was so placed that it might reflect the *Tanabata* stars, so that the passing through the Milky Way of the Heavenly Herdsman might be observed. At this time the ladies of the Imperial household would attempt to thread a needle by the light of the reflection of the stars, and if successful it would be considered most auspicious.

Poems were also written in eulogy of the Celestial Lovers, or as a greeting to them; these frequently bore a request that the star-deities would lend their influences in bringing to a happy conclusion a pending love affair. For these, the ink was always prepared with dew instead of the customary water, and in some localities they were written in duplicate by the young women on *kaji no ki*, two pieces of paper shaped like mulberry leaves because the latter grow in pairs. One of these the girl would put under her pillow to be dreamt upon, and the other—tied to the red-handled brush she had been using—she would float down any near-by stream, symbolizing the River of Heaven, as an appeal to the gods to grant her her dearest wish.

Should the weather be unfavourable at the time of the festival, there would be great lamentation for the unhappy star-lovers, and the falling rain would be designated as the *Namida no Ame*, “The Rain of Tears.”

The antiquity of the legend of the Herdsman and the Weaver has been ascertained from a statute known as the Celestial Weaver which, according to its inscription, was placed on the shores of Lake Ku'en-ming in China about A.D. 800; and the feeling entertained by successive generations for the sentiment of the myth and the beauty of the sculpture is aptly expressed by an unknown writer of the following poem:

A thing of stone beside Lake Ku'en-ming  
Has for a thousand autumns borne the name of the Celestial Weaver.  
Like that star she shines above the waters,  
Wondering at her own pale loveliness.  
Unnumbered waves have brodered, with green moss,  
The marble folds about her feet,  
Toiling eternally, they knock the stone  
Like tireless shuttles plied upon a sounding loom.  
Her pearly locks resemble snow-coils on the mountain top,  
Her eyebrows arch—like the crescent moon,  
A smile lies on the opened lily of her face,  
And since she breathes not, being stone,  
The birds light on her shoulders,  
Flutter without fear at her still heart.  
Immovable she stands before the eternal mirror of her charms,  
And, gazing at their beauty,  
Lets the years slip into the centuries of the past,



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE BULL

*(Continued)*

*You ploughed the lofty snow clouds beside the ocean gate, No herdsman watched your gentle ramblings;  
You grazed on dewy meadows and tracked the snowy hills; Under the Bodhi tree you met the goat and deer,  
And by the Lotus pond, the elephant and, dragon;  
Your head and horns against the evening sky of blue and purple-pink  
Are like the jade hibiscus that break the crystal lake.*

LI FU, *Ming Dynasty*.



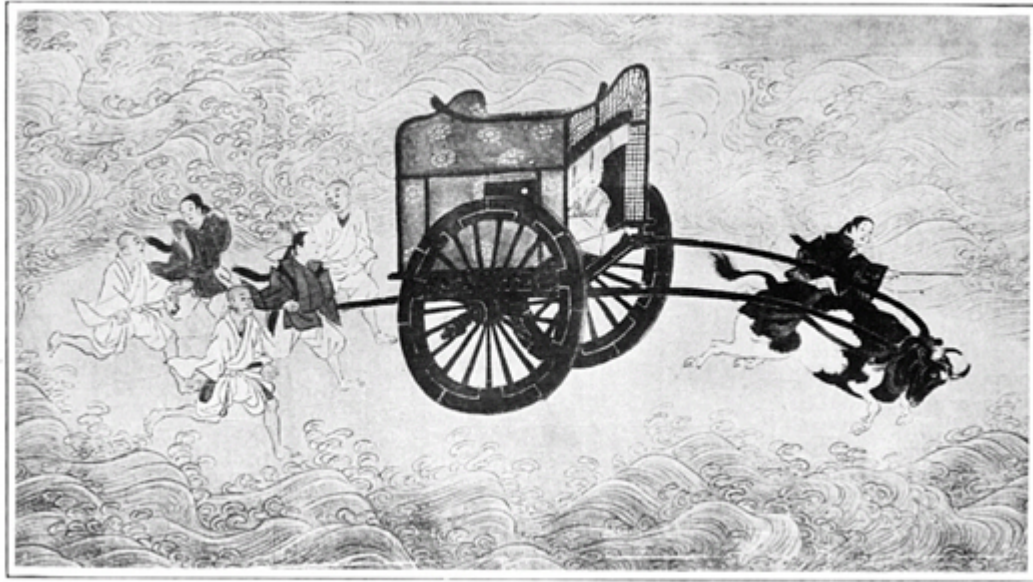
From a Japanese painting by Toba Sōjō. The Battle of the Bulls

OF all animals that have been associated with man since the dawn of civilization, the bull and the cow are pre-eminent. In most parts of the world and, among most peoples these two creatures have had a most intimate relationship with humanity.

In China, the estimation in which the bullock is held is shown in innumerable ways. It is one of the twelve animals of the zodiac, and the emblem of spring and agriculture. It still holds a place in the Gracious Ploughing, the annual ceremony which occurs on the first day of the first Chinese month. Upon this occasion a pair of pure white bullocks, harnessed with red velvet ropes wrapped with gold thread, are yoked to the sacred plough, resplendent with decorations. Then, not only is the sacred field furrowed amid great ceremony by the Emperor, assisted by princes and ministers, but a monstrous clay image of a cow, together with hundreds of smaller bovine images, is broken and the pieces carried away by the people to be distributed over their fields to insure abundance in the forthcoming crops. A living bullock is slaughtered, also, in sacrifice to heaven and earth and the Imperial ancestors. This was known as *Shi niu*, and of such importance was the particular character and quality of these animals that they were especially bred under government inspection.

The bullock sacrificed was also made the occasion for a feast, although only at this ceremony was it ever permitted to eat the flesh of the animal, and then only by the Imperial family and the highest officials. Originally, the Taoists, in their appreciation of the services of the bullock, reasoned that a dumb creature that laboured so patiently for the benefit of man should be treated with just

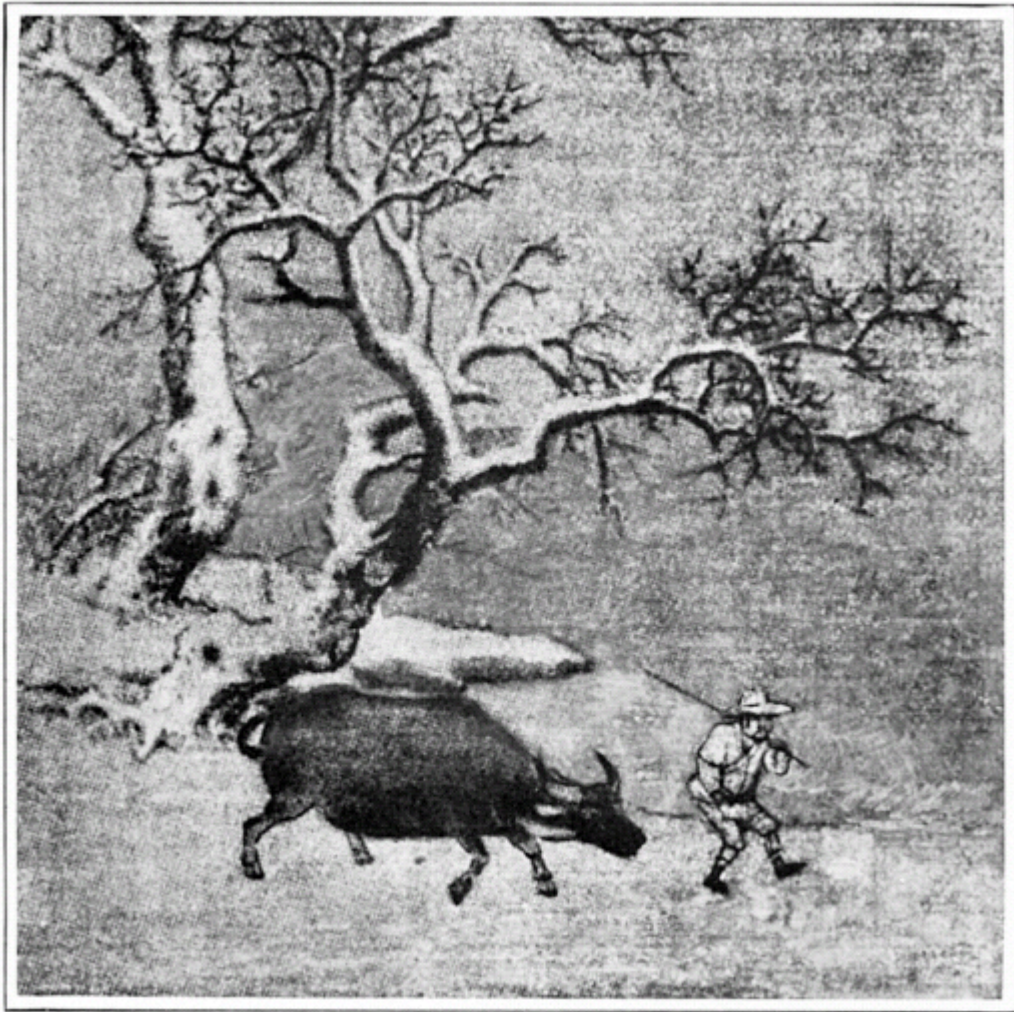
consideration, and not after long years of faithful toil be killed and eaten. The Buddhists, likewise, forbade it. Their doctrine of reincarnation, which still remained tinged with the Hindu ideas of transmigration, regarded the eating of all flesh as an abomination; for, if by some misdeed a human soul, for punishment, was reborn in the body of an animal, how could it be known that by killing it an ancestor, relative, or friend was not being murdered? Consequently, tales innumerable are related not only of the punishments meted out to beefeaters, but also of the rewards of merit bestowed upon those who abstain from the eating of any kind of flesh.



From a Japanese scroll-painting by Mitsunobu. Kitano Tenjin

A Chinese book of maxims includes many references to this subject, and, in connection with one, there is an illustration representing the spirit of a bullock appearing before one of the rulers of hell complaining of the ignominious manner in which his body has been treated after he had toiled so faithfully for his keepers. He laments that his flesh has been eaten, his hide made into drumheads, and his horns into ornaments for women.





From a Chinese painting. Homeward Bound

To this, the ruler replies: “The deceased killers of bullocks are now enduring punishment in hell. Some are tossed upon the tree of knives, others are thrown upon the hill of swords. Some have molten lead poured down their throats, others are bound upon red-hot iron posts. Through the eternal years they shall not be born into this world again except as bullocks.”

Another legend bearing on the same subject relates that a man by the name of Chang Chin was very fond of beef and freely indulged this taste. So one day he dreamt he was in a strange place and saw a building with a sign on its front, King of Oxen. Entering, to his astonishment he found there imprisoned many of his friends and relatives, who informed him they were paying the penalty for having eaten beef. While listening to their unhappy tale, he was suddenly seized by an ox-headed man who harshly confronted him with, “You, too, have eaten much beef, and when you die you will suffer a like punishment for fully ten years. Then you will be reborn as a calf as many times as you have eaten beef.” Next day, Chang told his family of his singular experience and most unexpectedly died.

In India, however, when the VEDAS were written, beef was a popular food. It was at a very much later period that the bull was invested with the attributes of deity. On the other hand, the cow was always considered too sacred to be eaten because, as the source of the sustenance of human life, she was regarded as its Great Mother.





From a Chinese painting on woven paper by the Emperor K'ang Hsi. Ploughing

There was a special cow-cult, which in its doctrine of transmigration held that every soul migrates with the cow immediately preceding its assumption of the human form. It likewise maintained that the cow performed the supreme service of escorting the soul across the dread river of death which bounds the lower world. Therefore, Manu classes the slaughter of a cow, with that of a Brāhman, as a deadly sin for which there is no pardon—a Hindu law so seriously observed that the government of India has been at times most seriously embarrassed to supply meat to the Christians and Mohammedans. He, furthermore, states that a protector and preserver of a cow or a Brāhman atones for the crime of killing a priest. In some Hindu states, the official punishment for killing a cow is death; and if anyone by accident kills one he must make a pilgrimage to the Ganges—all the way carrying a cow's tail aloft on a long staff to proclaim his penance—and there perform the required purifying rites.



From a Japanese scroll-painting of Kamakura period. Crossing the Osaka Pass in Winter

The cow's tail, in particular, appears to have been considered efficacious and used in many ceremonies. It was a symbol of regal power and regarded as potent in warding off evil spirits, while a binding oath was sworn by pouring water on it. It also figured in the marriage ceremony, and offered much solace to the dying, when they were able to grasp it; for then the pious Hindu felt certain that the Sacred Cow would pull him safely over the dreaded Vaitaranī, "River of Death." Many a criminal has been given much consolation before his execution by being handed a cow's tail.

The origin of this fetish is attributed to the following fable: Sivā once appeared in his fiery form, and Vishnu and Brahmā journeyed in opposite directions to see how far his lights extended. Upon their return Vishnu declared it was beyond limit, but Brahmā claimed he had found the end. Vishnu then called upon the great *Kāmadhenu*, "The Cow of Plenty," to decide the question. She sided with Brahmā with her tongue, but shook her tail to Vishnu, denying the statement. Thereupon Vishnu ruled that her mouth should ever be impure, but that her tail should remain holy for all time.



From a Chinese painting. Returning from the Chase

A long-haired bushy tail of the cow of the western country was tied on the flag which led an army to battle. This is referred to in the following, taken from a Chinese poem:

Oh! to be led by a cow's tail;  
It is a suitable device for our military flag.  
It brushes the brooding sky free from clouds,  
It leads the trumpet and is the goal of the advancing army.

In more modern times, however, judging from the jingle taken from Mr. Headland's translation of the CHINESE MOTHER GOOSE RHYMES, the cow has fallen from grace. She no longer is regarded with the reverence anciently bestowed upon her, a fact which must have been felt by the sympathetic soul who wrote the following lines entitled "What the Old Cow Said":

A sad old cow to herself once said,  
While the north wind whistled through her shed,  
"To head a drum they will take my skin,  
And they'll file my bones for a big hairpin;  
The scraps of bone they will make into dice,  
And sell them off at a very low price.





From an extended drawing of the Vaphio cup

My sinews they'll make into a whip,  
I wot, And my flesh they'll put in a big soup pot."

Agricultural and pastoral life has been so largely dependent upon the bullock and the cow for labour and food—particularly in Asiatic countries—that they have ever been conspicuous in rural scenes and naturally became a favourite theme for painters in both China and Japan, interesting examples of which are herewith given.



From a photograph of the Vaphio cup



From a pen-and-ink draw Bull-slaying. The *Tauroctonos* or Mithra

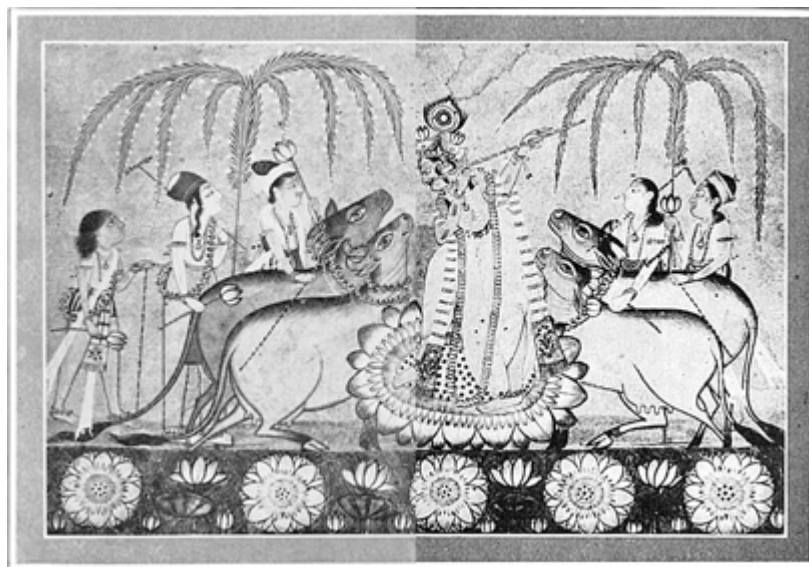
In the Chinese paintings the subjects are strictly agricultural and pastoral, as shown in the companion illustrations, “Homeward Bound” and “Returning from the Chase.” They both are unsigned, but of the Sung dynasty composition and style. The one entitled “Ploughing” is known as a *pei wên* study because it is painted on woven paper. It is inscribed with the following poem, written by the Emperor K’ang Hsi (Ch’ing dynasty) and ably expresses the spirit of the theme:

The old farmer cultivates the land diligently, giving great attention to all things around,  
 From morning to night he guides the plough and never willingly relinquishes it.  
 Then, with the harrow, drawn by the black bullocks, he smoothes the rough surface  
 That the spring waters may cover the field equally.  
 I, the Emperor, K’ang Hsi, have written this.  
 May Heaven enable me to give peace and harmony to all people!



From an Indian painting. Indra with Indrānī, worshipping Sivā, with Pārvatī and Ganesha

In both of the Japanese scroll-paintings the subject is of a different order, showing the manner in which the carts of the mighty were drawn by bullocks. In the one by Tosa Mitsunobu (1434–1525), the prelate, Hōshōbō of Kitano Jinsha—a temple in Kyōto, built in honour of Sugawara no Michizane—is *en route* to visit the Emperor. He is driving his bullock cart through the turbulent river Kamo, the waters of which separated miraculously to permit him a safe passage. In the other, a painting, unidentified, of the Kamakura period, a party of tourists is shown crossing the Ōsaka Mountain Pass.



From an Indian painting. Sri Krishna Playing the Flute for the Milkmaids

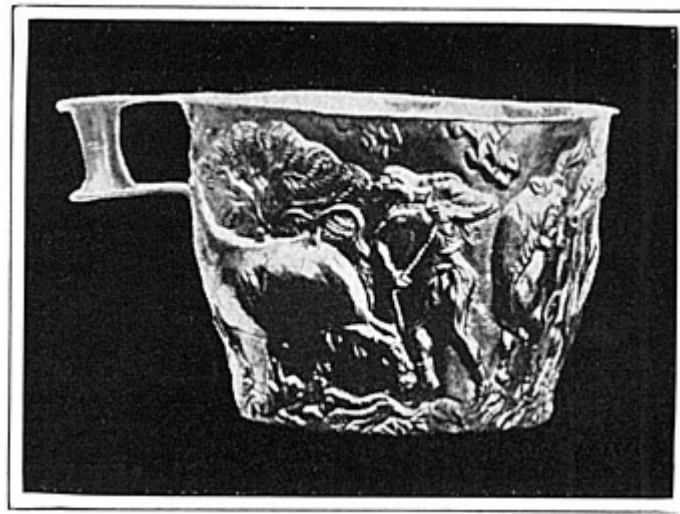


The worship of the bull and the cow has prevailed in many parts of the world, and, whether with the ancient Babylonians or with, the later half-civilized Kaffirs of Africa, these creatures have generally been regarded with the same reverence and significance. This fact cannot be entirely attributed to the migration of symbols, for in every instance it has been from the inherent qualities of the animals and their service to humanity that their symbology has been derived.



From an extended drawing of the Vaphio cup

The bull has ever typified dominant, sturdy strength and fecundity in procreation, while the cow, on account of the milk she has supplied, has always symbolized the fertility which nurtured mankind.



From a photograph of the Vaphio cup

In the bull, primitive man saw reflected Nature's own energies and activities; hence, not only has it been figured in a constellation, but it likewise has been placed in the zodiacs of both the Western and Eastern civilizations, where in the former it is known as *Taurus*, and in the latter as *Niu* among the Chinese, and as *Brisk*, *Vrisha*, or *Vrishabha* among the Hindus.

The sun enters this sign, which is that of the second house, in April, the time when life reappears after the long dead winter. Therefore, during the vernal equinox, at the paschal period—when Christians likewise admit their catechumens to the rites of baptism—from time immemorial, fetes and festivals have been celebrated at which the bull was sacrificed with the belief that its virility and fecundity would enter the earth to fructify it.

During such a festival occurred the Greek Dithyramb, The Bull-driving Spring Song, sung by the holy women of Elis, when they summoned Dionysus to appear by singing:



In Spring-time, O Dionysus,  
To thy holy temple come,  
To Elis with thy Graces,  
Rushing with bull-foot, come,  
Noble Bull, noble Bull!

Thereupon the sacred white bull, especially reared for the occasion, gorgeous with floral decorations, was driven to the scene of sacrifice by the Three Graces—literally Three Queens of the May—bedecked with wreaths of spring-blossoms.



From an Indian painting. Krishna, the Divine Cowherd, sheltering Rādhā from the Rain

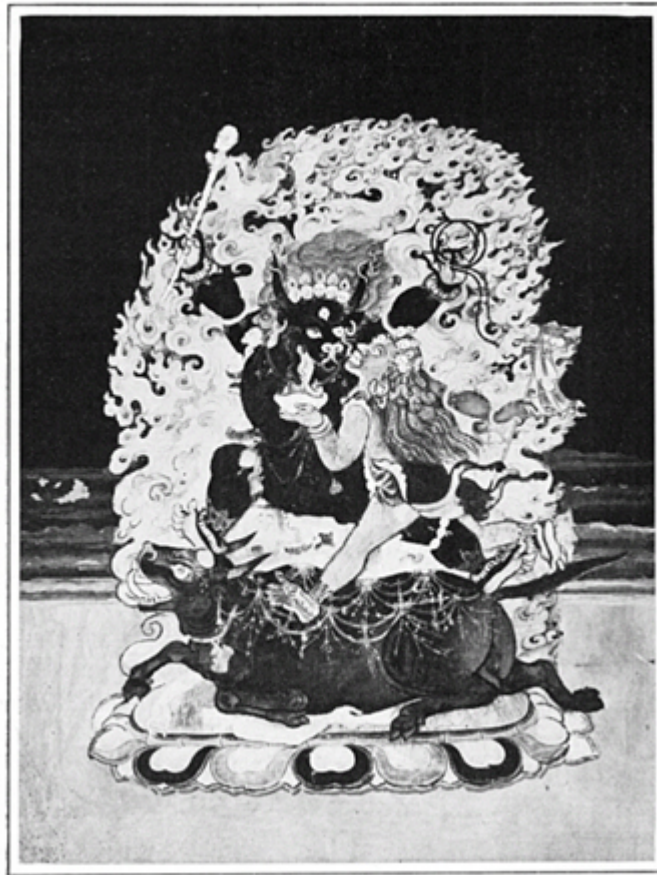
The bull was also an important factor in the athletics of ancient Greece. Bull-grappling performances, in which acrobats leap upon the backs of running animals, are represented in the frescoes of Tiryns and on the coins and other tomb articles found at Mycenæ. An interesting example of the representation of this subject is shown in the accompanying illustrations of the gold cups found at Vaphio, a small place near Sparta.



From a Japanese painting of the Fujiwara period. Emma-ō, the King of Hell

A most notable example of Bull sacrifice existed in connection with the Mithraic religion of Persia. Its portrayal, in ancient and mediaeval bas-reliefs, has been found all over Europe. These sculptures are known as the *Tauroctonos*, “Bull-slaying Mithra,” and represent a youth in Phrygian attire, on top of a bull, pulling its head backward by one hand and stabbing it with the other—as shown in the given illustration.

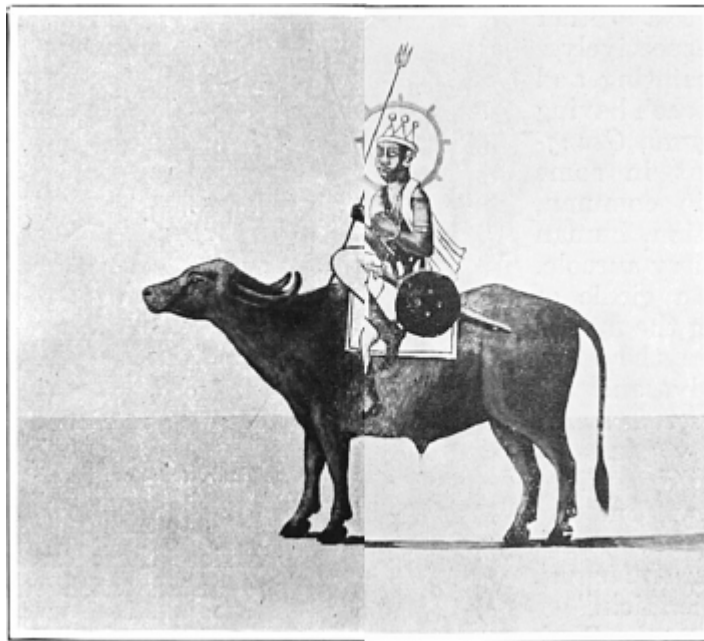
A legend compiled from the study of these sculptures—there being no other record—designates Mithra as the god of light or the dawn, who was born of a rock and equipped with a knife and a torch, by means of which he could combat any foe. After many exploits, in which he was ever the victor, he attacked and slew the Divine Bull—the first creature of life created by the Supreme Being Ormuzd. Then, from the carcass of the animal, there sprang spontaneously into being all the beneficent and useful things of life.



From an Indian painting. Yama, the God of Death

Another Bull-sacrificing rite, originally connected with the ancient Mazdaian religion of Persia, then adopted into the Phrygian faith, and later practised by the Romans in the worship of Magna Mater, the Great Mother, was known as the *Taurobolium*, "The Baptism of Blood." For this, the worshipper, clothed as a beggar, humble in spirit, descended into a pit covered with a lattice grating upon which a bull—with a forehead glittering with gold-leaf and a body adorned with garlands of flowers—was stabbed to death with a consecrated spear. The devotee eagerly received the streams of hot blood in his eyes, ears, nose, and mouth, even swallowing some. He then emerged from the sanctuary drenched and dripping and gory, as one who had been born again by the washing away of his sins in the blood of the bull. The efficacy of this lustration was supposed to last twenty years, when it had to be repeated, although in some cases it was thought to be eternal.

Cattle appear among the earliest domesticated animals and undoubtedly were important factors of primitive civilization. Their remains have been found in the Swiss lake-dwellings along with stone implements and other records of Neolithic man, while line representations in painting and sculpture have been discovered on the walls of caves in Spain and France which archaeologists claim antedate 10,000 B.C. They are mentioned in the oldest manuscripts of the Hebrew and Hindu people and were figured on Egyptian monuments as early as 4,000 B.C.



From a Tibetan painting. Yama, the God of Death

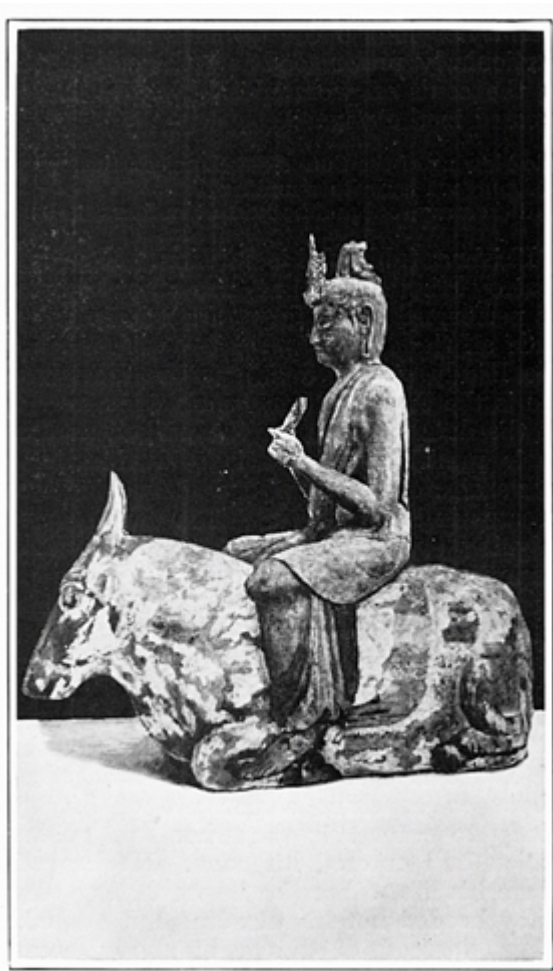
Bull-gods abound in all religions. Crete had its Minotaur to which the ancient Grecians sent, every nine years, a sacrificial tribute of seven youths and seven maidens. The Babylonians had their Baal; the Egyptians, their Apis; the Greeks, their Zeus; the Phoenicians, their Moloch; the Assyrians, their winged human-headed bulls; the Syrians, their Attis; the Hittites, their Sadan; and it is claimed that Yahveh of the Hebrews—who was cradled and nurtured among bull-worshipping nations—was also a bull-deity, while bull-traits and features persisted even into Christianity, manifesting themselves in St. Luke himself, who is symbolized by this form.

In India, a sacred white bull—named Nandī—is the *vāhan* or mount of Sivā, “The Destroyer,” and third person of the Hindu triad; for this god personifies the qualities symbolized by the bull—the eternal reproductive power of nature perpetually recreating itself after disintegration. Hence, all temples and shrines devoted to the worship of Sivā have an image of Nandī in front of them; and at the death of one of the faithful, a bullock is freed and permitted to roam at large. Such creatures are considered sacred, and not only are they never molested, but they are treated with great consideration. To feed them or show them any kindness is thought to be a meritorious act. There are so many of these bullocks in some parts of India that they are a source of much annoyance to the farmers.

In a given illustration Indra, with his consort Indrānī, mounted on his white elephant, Airāvata, is shown in an attitude of worship before Sivā, who, with his consort Parvātī and their son Ganesha, is seated on his white bull, Nandī. In this Indian fantasy the artist has very cleverly so devised the representation of the heads of the two sacred animals to appear as one that from one point of view it is that of an elephant, and from the other that of a bull.

In two other illustrations, pages 96-97, another deity, associated with the bovine tribe, is the much-beloved youthful Krishna, who is so frequently shown in company with the milkmaids. For with this god it is not the bull but the cow which has been given distinction.





From a Japanese sculpture of the Fujiwara period. Emma-ō, the King of Hell

While Krishna, at times, is regarded as a mortal hero transformed into a god, he is generally said to be the eighth *avatār* of Vishnu, The Preserver, and second person of the triad, who became incarnate in order to rid the earth of the tyrant, King Kansa. The latter, however, becoming apprised of this intention, planned to circumvent it by seizing the child at birth and destroying it. In this, however, he was foiled by the father, who succeeded in making an exchange of his son for that of Nanda, a herdsman. Hence, Krishna grew up among simple, rustic people, and from his eighth year he daily went with the cowherds to the pastures and returned at the time of Cow-Dust. He had for his companions the *gopas* and *gopis*—cowherds and their wives, the milkmaids. Among the latter, Rādhā was his favourite, and scenes representing their devotion have furnished many popular themes for painters and poets.



From a Tibetan painting. Yamantaka, the Conqueror of Death

In one of the accompanying illustrations, Krishna is protecting Rādhā from the rain, while the other milkmaids are left to look after themselves. In another illustration, Krishna is stirring the souls of the *gopis* by the witchery of his flute, the music of which “rained such delight that the gods as well as the sages came to listen.”

The legends of Krishna and Rādhā are not regarded as ordinary love romances, but as epics symbolic of eternal truths. Rādhā was no mere milkmaid, but a Svakiya heroine whose name is ever coupled with that of the god in hymns, prayers, and pictures, while his wives are seldom mentioned.

The flute of Krishna is symbolic of the sword which cuts the spirit free from the illusion of life. Its music is the “Voice of eternity crying to the dwellers in time”; but it is particularly understood as “the call of the Infinite to the souls of womankind,” which is so well expressed in the poem:

The blowing of the flute diffuses poison through my frame.  
Insistently I hear its sounding  
And then my soul and body melt in fear.

Krishna fulfilled his mission. Not only did he destroy King Kansa but, like other heroes and gods, he performed many feats of a miraculous nature.

Of all the deities associated with the bull, Yama, the Hindu god of death, is the most conspicuous. He is the Indian Pluto, who reigns over the region of the doomed, judging the wicked and meting out their punishments. It is said that he originally was a king of Vaisali who, while waging bloody wars, became imbued with the idea that he would, enjoy reigning over hell. He therefore appealed to the Supreme Being for the privilege. His prayer was answered, in consequence of which he, his generals,

and his entire army were reborn in the under-world, over which he has ever since had entire jurisdiction. In one of the accompanying illustrations he is shown as this king riding a black bullock.

The most familiar legend associated with the origin of Yama is that he was an ascetic who was just about to conclude a penance of fifty years and ready to enter *Nirvana* when two robbers with a stolen bull entered his cave. He begged them to spare his life, otherwise he would lose all his merit. They heeded not his pleading but cut off his head, when, instead of dying, his body became transformed into a ferocious form. Then, attacking the bull, he severed its head and placed it on his own shoulders, after which he killed the robbers, made their skulls into cups and drank their blood. Intoxicated with this human beverage and raging with great fury, he roamed abroad, destroying every creature that crossed his path until he threatened the depopulation of the country. The people in their terror appealed to Mañjuśrī, the god of wisdom, for protection. He heard their supplication, but in order to combat the monster, he assumed a form more terrible and forbidding than that of Yama, becoming Yamāntaka or “He who vanquishes death,” and thus equipped he overcame the despoiler.

Yama belongs to the debased Mahā Tantra system which appeared in India in the sixth century and later became very popular in Tibet and Mongolia, but never was adopted into either China or Japan.

The original Yama, referred to in the *Vedas*, was a king who dwelt in celestial light where he welcomed the pure and good. He was said to have been the first mortal who died, and having discovered the way to the next world, volunteered his services as a guide for all mortals who sought an entrance to Paradise.

Then, in the RIG VEDA, it is related that Yama and Yamī, his sister, were the primeval pair from whom sprang the human family. This pair was also said to be the personification of Day and Night, the offspring of *Vivasat*, the “Sun, or Sky,” and of *Saranya*, the “Dawn.”

The word Yama is derived from the Hindu word *Jamma-rāja*, “Royal Pair,” and applied to a brother and sister who judge men and women respectively.

In the representations of Yama in painting and sculpture there are three principal forms, each having many variations, and known as *Phyi-sgrub*, *Gsang-sgrub*, and *Snag-sgrub*. While different in some respects, they have many attributes in common, such as a third eye, a ferocious expression, human hair floating upward and mingling in a fiery aureole, a crown of skulls, naked bodies with a girdle of human heads and many jewels, including the mystic *cakra*, “wheel of life.” They all have the lotus throne, upon which lies a human body, and are generally bull-headed, although *Snag-sgrub* sometimes has the visage of a demon. They generally have but two arms, although there are exceptions to this. The symbols they hold vary, but are limited to the *Kartrikā*, “chopper”; *kapāla*, “skull-cup”; *beng*, “mace”; *pāśa*, “lasso”; *cintāmani*, “magic jewel”; and *khātvānga*, “magic stick.”

The accompanying illustration represents the *Phyi-sgrub* form, who always steps on the bull carrying the lasso and magic stick. He is ever accompanied by his sister, Yamī, who also has the third eye and wears both a crown and a girdle of skulls. While over her shoulders is flung the pelt of a bull.

It is under the form of *Gsang-sgrub* that Yama was conquered by Yamāntaka, and under the form of *Snag-sgrub* that he is represented as the Judge of Hell.

In China, Yama is known as Yen-lo Wang. He is, however, only one of ten judges of the underworld, who act under Ti-tsang, the “supreme being of lofty enlightenment.” The common people sincerely believe that not only does Yen-lo Wang judge them with strict impartiality after death, but that he fixes the very hour when they shall pass away, and nothing can alter or postpone it.

In Japan, Yama is known as Emma-ō, and the Japanese have adopted Yamāntaka, but in an entirely different form. In the given illustrations entitled Emma-ō, he is shown in the guise of Mañjuśrī himself, mounted on the sacred white bull. In this form he no longer wars with the king of death, but acts as the saviour of those who are condemned to the punishments of the under-world.

Yamāntaka is so complex a creation that he almost forbids description. While resembling Yama, the latter’s parts and attributes are much multiplied, for Yamāntaka has sixteen legs and thirty-four arms, the hands of which hold all the different *Tantra* symbols. His bull-head is supplemented by eight others capped by the head of Mañjuśrī himself, each of which has the third eye, a menacing aspect, and a crown of skulls. His dark blue body wears a mantle of human skin, jewelled chains, and



a girdle of human heads and skulls entwined with serpents. He is enthroned on a lotus stand upon which are arranged human and animal forms. He holds his *śakti*, “the female energy,” by two arms, the hands of which grasp a chopper and a skull-cup. The *śakti*, whose body is adorned with jewelled chains, with arms extended, also holds the chopper and skull-cup. She has a most forbidding visage, the third eye, and a crown of skulls.

## CHAPTER XIV

# THE HORSE

*Verily, the dawn is the head of the horse which is fit for sacrifice. The sun is its eye, the wind its breath, and the foaming sea its habitation.*

From the BRĀHMANAS.



From a woodcut by Keisai Masayoshi

THE horse, in China, is called *ma* and, in Japan, *uma*, in imitation of the cry of the animal. In India its Sanskrit name is *asu*, meaning “speed,” while its Aryan name is *asaba*, signifying, “to run.”

The earliest recorded history of many countries include accounts of the horse, proving that it existed in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece, dating back as far as the Mycenæan Period. To China it was not indigenous, but an importation from adjacent countries. This accounts for the fact that the bullock held so important a place, and is more frequently mentioned in the ancient writings than the horse, although in later script such comparisons as the following are often found: “The horse being swift and spirited, and having a hoof with a single part, which relegates it to the category of odd numbers, is classified under the *Yang* or masculine principle of nature. For this reason it symbolizes the element of fire; while the cow, being gentle and slow, and having a hoof of two parts, which is an even number, is classified under the *Yin* or feminine principle and therefore symbolizes the element of earth. The difference between the two animals is further described in that when a horse is sick he lies down—otherwise he stands—whereas if a cow is sick she stands, contrary to her usual habits. Also, in stooping, a horse first doubles his back legs, but the cow reverses this order. Then, in rising, the horse first straightens his fore legs, but the cow her rear ones. Again, when a horse is frightened he runs against the wind, whereas the cow in a similar mood runs with it. It is also stated that when the two animals are drinking at the same trough, if the horse drinks first, there will not be enough for either, but if the cow drinks first, there will be plenty for both.”

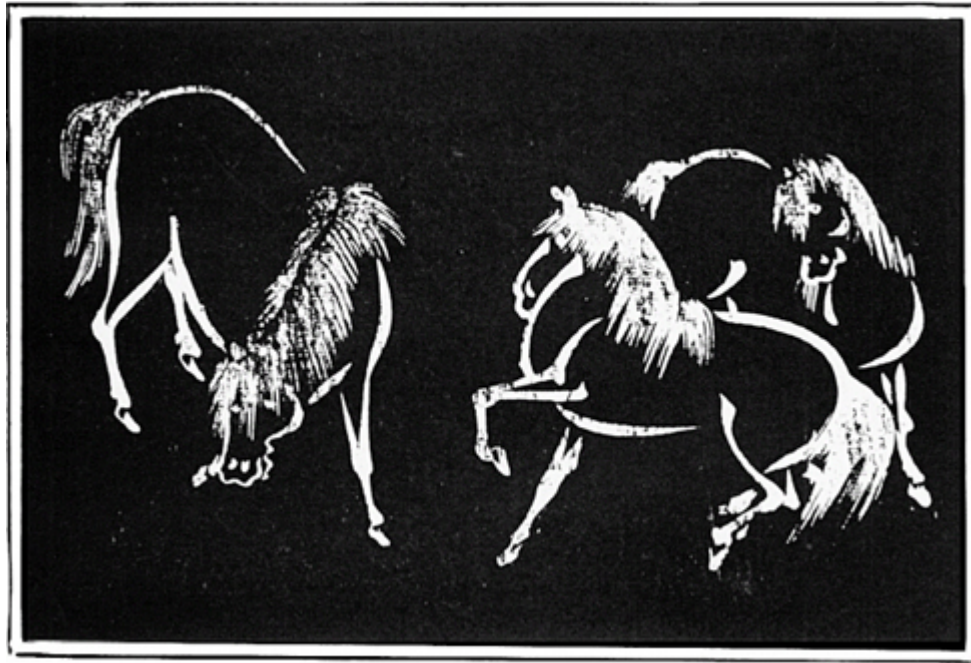
The relative esteem in which the cow and horse were held in the first century B.C. was expressed when Kung Sui, the governor of Po Hai, ordained that the price of a horse should be low, while that of a cow should be high, in order to discourage the warrior and encourage the farmer.

The bovine tribe everywhere antedating the equine, naturally became the established beast of labour, hence the horse was generally reserved for driving and riding in relation to warfare and the chase, although, in time, certain breeds of horses were kept exclusively for agricultural purposes.

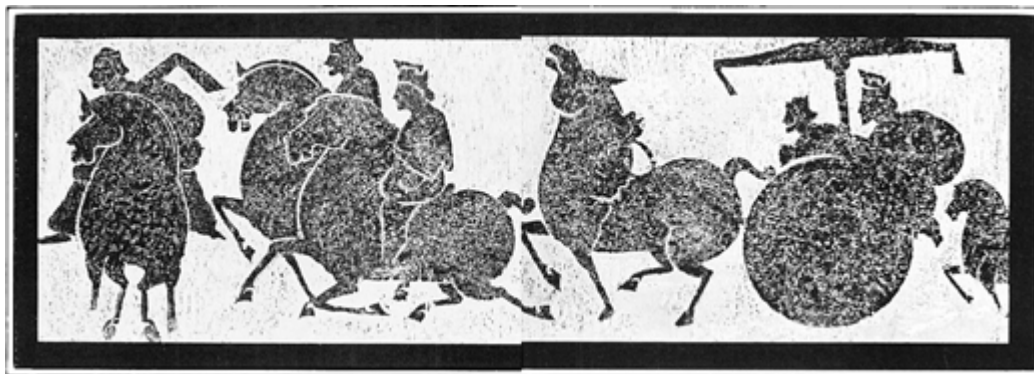
The first use of the horse was in connection with the chariot, for both civil and military purposes. In China, according to the BOOK OF RITES, six drew the Imperial chariot; three, a lord's; two, an official's; and one, a citizen's.

Chinese painting includes many subjects in which chariots are represented as well as warriors on horseback. The earliest portrayal of horsemen herewith given is a reproduction of an ink-rubbing from a bas-relief of the Han dynasty. This is one of a series of scenes representing the reception, on the Kw'ên Lun Mountain, of King Wu by Hsi Wang Mu, the Royal Queen Mother of the West.

The chariot of King Muh Wang of Chou was said to have been drawn by the *Pa Ch'ün Ma*, "Eight Famous Horses"—each of which had a distinguishing name—and driven by Ts'ao Fu "wherever wheel ruts ran or hoofs had trodden."



From a Japanese painting by Eitoku



From an ink-rubbing of a Chinese bas-relief of the Han dynasty

Innumerable are the poems and paintings of warriors and their steeds. Among the most celebrated painters are Hsieh Ta'o Wei of the Chin dynasty, fourth century A.D.; Han Kan, and T'sao Pa of the T'ang dynasty, eighth century; and Chao Mêng-fu of the Yüan dynasty, thirteenth century. In Japan, Kanaoka of the ninth century is the earliest of these painters. His horses were so infused with life that it was said they periodically left their picture stalls and roamed abroad, committing depredations until

checked—one of them by having its eyes put out. and the other by having a tether painted, tying it within the frame.



From a sepulchral clay figure of the T'ang dynasty

Illustrations of the artistic representation of horses are given in the reproductions of the Japanese paintings by Eitoku and Tanyū, the ink rubbing of a Chinese intaglio carving of the Ch'in dynasty, the sepulchral clay figure of the T'ang dynasty, and the sculptured figure on the ancient Korean mirror-back; all of which portray—if not with anatomical accuracy—the life and spirit of the animal with all its fire and grace of motion.



From an ancient Korean mirror-back

In China, the earliest known horse is the traditional *lung ma*, “dragon-horse,” a mythical animal represented in the pictorial arts with the head of a dragon on the body of a horse. It has the neck of a serpent, flame-like appendages issuing from its shoulders and hips, and bears on its back the *Pahwa*, which contains the *Yang* and *Yin* surrounded by the Eight Tri grams. The latter was interpreted by the legendary Fu Hsi and made the basis of a philosophy which has been for centuries a dominant influence in the Yellow Kingdom.





From an ink-rubbing of a Chinese intaglio carving of the Chin dynasty

In Tibet there is a similar horse known as *long ma*, “wind-horse,” which is represented bearing on his saddle sometimes the sacred texts, at others a receptacle containing three *cintāmani*, “jewels of omnipotence.” This horse is referred to as one of the “Seven Gems” which are the necessary attributes of a monarch.

The natural swiftness of the horse, together with its strength and power to travel great distances, has led to such names as West Wind, Swift Foot, Lightning, Thousand Mile Steed, and Flying Horse. The latter was applied to the Hindu horse Assaratanam, the “Treasure horse all white with a black head, wonderful in power, flying through the sky.”

It was popularly supposed, in India and other ancient countries, that horses had wings; hence, it is not uncommon to see winged horses depicted in the ancient arts, as in the sculptures of Buddha Gaya, of the shrines of the Han dynasty of China, while the Occident likewise upholds this tradition in the Pegasus of Greece.

The speed of the horse is proverbially compared with the celerity of the sun—“the swift orb which hasteneth to run his course.” This common characteristic may be responsible not only for the sun’s being symbolized by a horse or a chariot yoked with fiery steeds, but also for the sacrifice of the horse at the worship of the sun, common to many early religions.





From a roof-tile of the Ming dynasty

Hindu books in particular are full of sun worship, which once extended all over Europe as well as Asia. In invoking Sūrya, the sun-god and regent of the southwest quarter of the universe, it was common to cast four horses into the sea. This deity likewise is distinguished by his chariot being drawn by seven horses or by one horse having seven heads. It may have been from such a sacrifice that the sea-horse of myth and legend originated.



From a Chinese painting by Chou Shun. *Arhats* Passing Through the Sea of Ignorance to the Shores of Wisdom

The sea-horse abounds in the arts of many nations and periods of time and it usually, in some form or other, symbolizes the sun. The relationship of the sun and the sea is identical with that of fire and water. In the Hindu BRĀHMANAS it is given that the sun produced the sea and that fire generated water, but the processes described only tend to further mystify the reader. It is usually represented either as a mythical animal rising from the sea and coursing through the waters as in the illustration by Morikuni

of *Kaibu*, the “Wild Horses of the Sea,” or as the steeds of the Greek Poseidon and his Roman counterpart, Neptune.



From a woodcut by Itchō. Emma-ō taking Jizō Fishing

Again, there are particular horses which, history records, are of themselves objects of worship. Such was the Indian Dadhikra which “scatters the hoar-frost like milk,” and was undoubtedly regarded as the symbol of the sun.

Another horse of early legend was Syāma Kama, “he of the black ears,” which alone was regarded as a suitable victim for the *Aswamedha* “Horse Sacrifice.” At this sacred ritual any devotee who would offer one hundred horses was entitled to displace Indra, the storm deity of heaven, just as the sun may dissipate the clouds and thereby destroy the tempest.

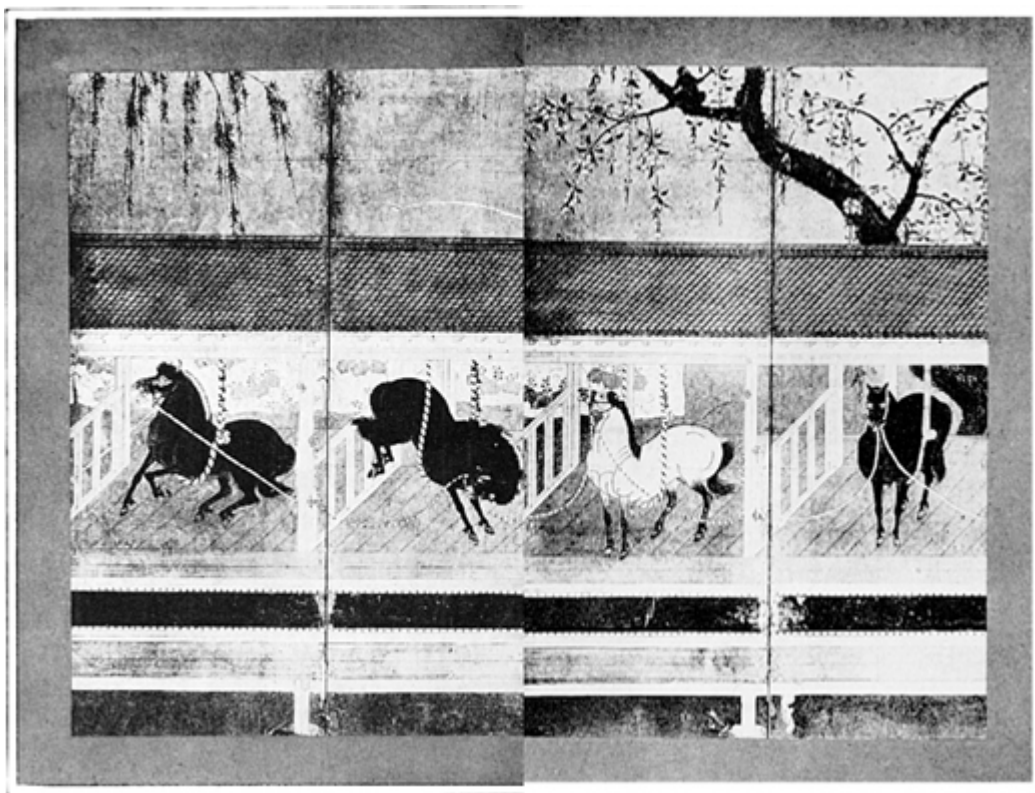
The first horse of legendary fame and described in the Hindu MAHĀBHĀEATĀ was named Uchchaih-sravus. This wonderful eight-headed horse, which became the property of Indra, was white with a black tail, as luminous as the sun, and as swift as thought. He was the prototype of the race of horses and one of the fourteen treasures produced when Vishnu Kūrma churned the ocean of milk—that sky astral substance, likened unto the “milky way,” existing in all space, which, by the vortex motion of the universal forces, became coalesced into concrete bodies.



From a woodcut by Tatsunobu. The Prolific Gourd

Then there was Kantanka, the white horse of Prince Siddārtha, the Buddha to be, which, when abandoned by his master, refused food and neighed mournfully toward the ascetic grove where sat “He who was struggling for enlightenment in order to alleviate the sufferings of mankind.”





From a Japanese screen-painting by Tanyū

In the illustration entitled “Through the Sea of Ignorance to the Shores of Wisdom”—a subject common to Chinese horizontal scroll paintings where a number of ascetics are shown either in strenuous activity or in peaceful repose, ranging from driving a dragon through the skies to sitting cross-legged in contemplation of the eternal verities—a sage is riding a white horse which may be none other than the famous Kantanka.

Another celebrated white horse is Kalki, which, it was prophesied, was to appear on earth with the tenth and last incarnation of Vishnu and to bring to this sad world the blessings of salvation and peace, quite in contrast to the prophetic horses of the Christian Apocalypse, which symbolize War, Death, Pestilence, and Famine.

White horses have ever been most highly prized. In many countries they became restricted to royal possessions, while in others they have been held sacred and used exclusively for religious purposes.

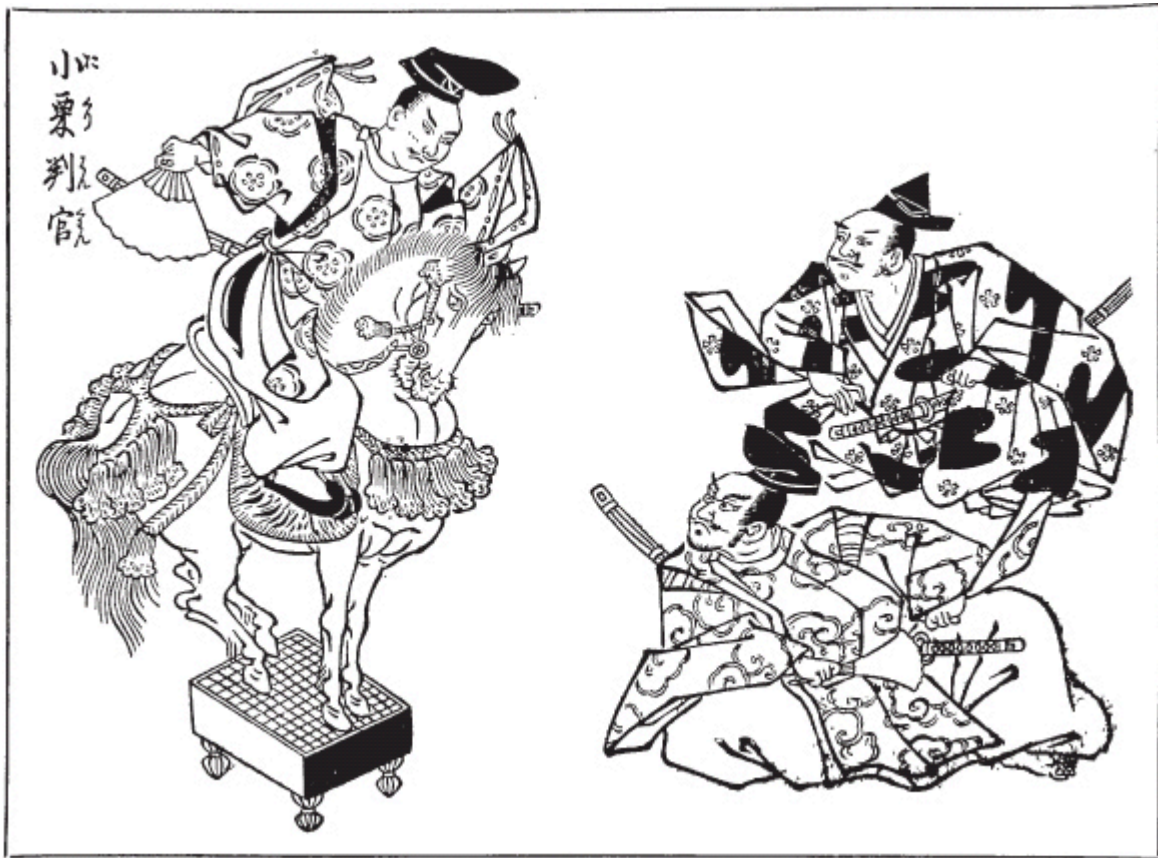
In Japan, Batō Kwannon, the horse-headed, one of the manifestations of the Goddess of Mercy, is so called because she is the particular deity who protects horses and cattle. She is distinguished by this name only through the horse-headed ornament she wears in her tiara, and is said to appear at times as a white horse, in which form she will carry anyone across the sea who supplicates her for such a service.

An interesting example of a sun and horse fable exists in the Japanese myth of Amaterasu, the sun deity who retired into a cave, leaving the world in darkness, because her brother Susano-o threw a flayed, piebald horse into her weaving apartments.



From a woodcut by Morikuni. Chōkwarō Conjuring His Horse from the Gourd

That the gods were believed to have the need for horses and used them is quite evident from the number of horse pictures, the *e-ma*, to be seen in the various temples. It was the custom to offer horses at the shrines, those of the albino variety being considered the most auspicious, hence the most acceptable. When a devotee could not afford a real horse he could present what was known as a *tsukari uma*, “made horse,” generally of wood or clay, or a picture of one. These pictures, such as the one held by a priest in the woodcut by Itchō of The Temple Offering, became so numerous that special buildings called *ema-dō*, “horse picture gallery,” were built to accommodate them. The *ema-dō* at Kiyomizu-dera in Kyōtō, and also at Itsukushima in the Inland Sea, are noted for their curious collections.



From a woodcut by Tange. Oguri Hangwan Reining His Horse, Onikage, on a *Go* Table

In another illustration entitled “The Merry Pilgrimage of Emma-ō and Jizō,” the inimitable Itchō not only offers an example of the association of the horse with the gods, but furnishes an amusing bit of caricature done in a vigorous piece of brush-work. Common to the oriental custom of interrelating subjects, this scene is made to represent Emma-ō, the presiding genius of Hades, taking the lotus-capped Jizō on a fishing picnic on the *Sai no Kawara*, the river where this god spends most of his time helping little children pile stones as prayers. The attendants carrying the luggage are not the familiar *oni*, “Buddhist demons,” but are horse- and bull-headed imps borrowed from the *Bon* festival, referred to in [Chapter XII](#). The *shakujō* of Jizō—the sacred ringed staff commonly used by mendicant priests to signal their approach—is used as a coolie’s pole to carry the fishing net and basket, while Emma-ō’s shoes and the lotus mounts of Jizō are hung at the right to balance the rings at the other end.





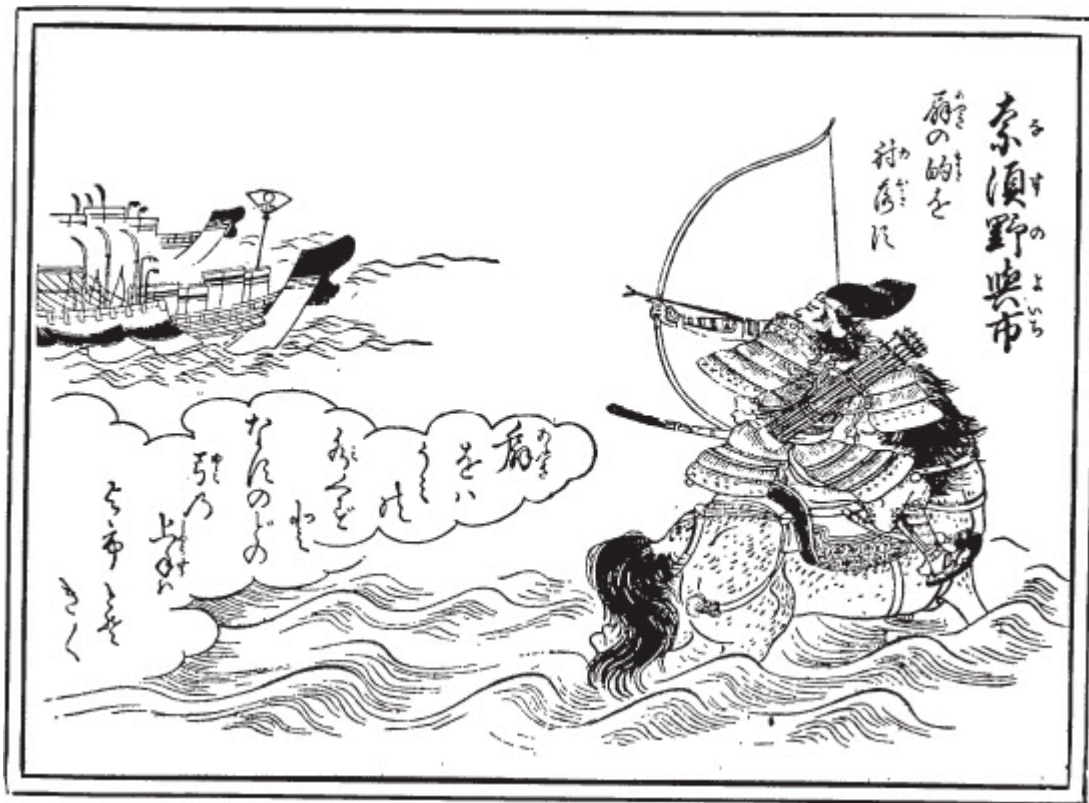
From a woodcut by Itchō. The Temple Offering



From a woodcut by Morikuni. *Kaibu*, The Wild Horses of the Sea

Among mortals who have become associated with the horse is the *sennin*, Chōkwarō, known to the Chinese as Ch'ang Kuo, one of the Eight *Rishi* of the Taoists. He is said to have lived in the seventh century and spent most of his time wandering about the country on a magic horse of his own creation. This remarkable steed, when not in service, was kept in a gourd which the *rishi* carried on a staff; but when needed Chōkwarō would vivify it and increase it to the necessary size by spraying it with water from his mouth. The accommodating creature required no food and could travel continuously for unlimited distances. This *rishi* is most popular with painters and is generally shown, as in the given illustration by Morikuni, conjuring his horse from the gourd. Often this subject is represented merely by a gourd freeing a horse or a number of horses as in the inimitable design by Tatsunobu given in the accompanying illustration, entitled "The Prolific Gourd," being intended to represent the common

saying *Hyōtan kara koma*, “Horse out of a gourd,” significant of that which is unexpected or impossible.



From a woodcut by Tsukioka Masanobu. The Warrior Nasu no Yoichi



From a woodcut by Hokusai. Ko U Throwing the Wild Horse Usui



Representations of the horse quite naturally occur in connection with a warrior riding into battle. In the given illustrations, one represents Nasu no Yoichi, the Minamoto archer who, in 1185, at the battle of Yashima, shot a fan from the mast of one of the enemy's ships. The Taira had been driven from Kyōto, and the young Empress, Nii no Ama, fled with the child - Emperor. Antoku, to the shrine of Itsuku-shima, where the head priest gave her a fan bearing the national emblem, the sun disc, known as *Hi no Maru*. This, he said, held the spirit of her dead husband and would protect the fleet from the enemy, causing their arrows to revert upon themselves. But Nasu's horsemanship enabled him to ride far into the waters, and his skill, to shatter the rivets which held the fan to the pole. This subject, herewith given by the woodcut by Tsukioka Masanobu, is most popular with artists, who frequently show the Empress standing on the ship.

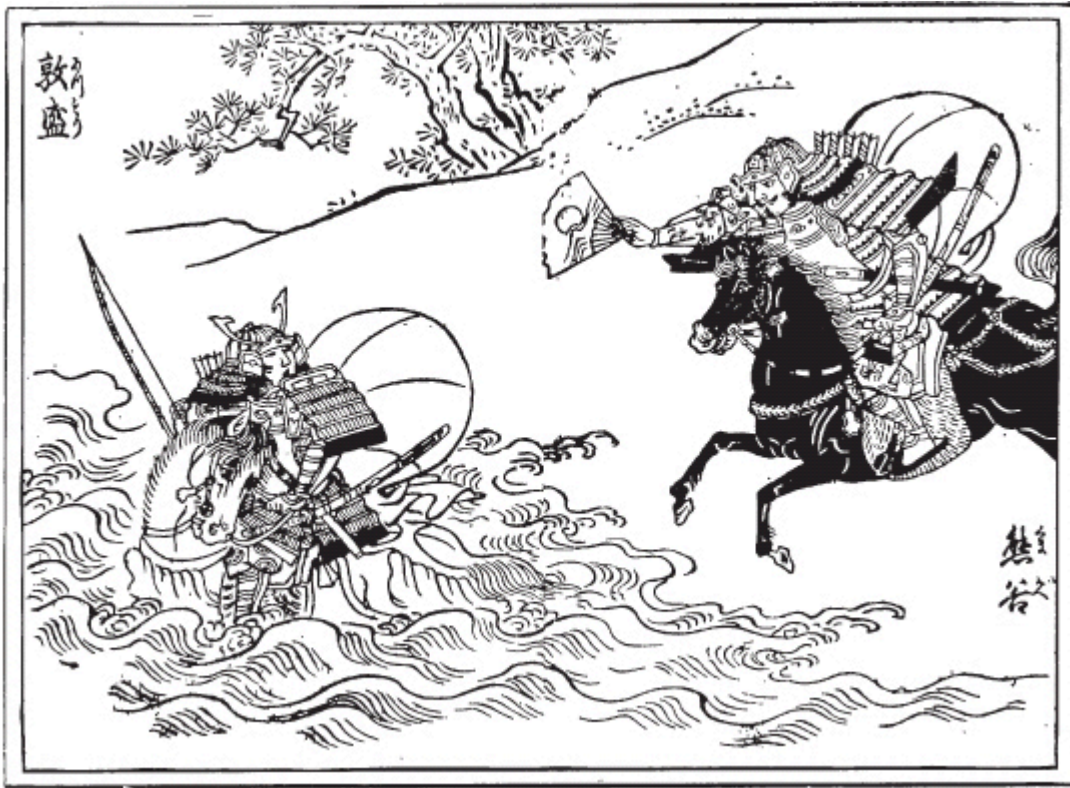


From a coloured woodcut by Shigenobu. Kaneko, the Strong Woman

In the other illustration, by the same artist, is shown Kumagaya Naozane challenging the youthful Atsumori. Of these two historical characters it is related that, at the battle of *Ichi no Tani*, when the Taira forces had been put to flight by the Minamoto, Atsumori, their leader, forgot his flute and, returning to get it, was overtaken by Naozane, a general in the Minamoto army. When, however, the latter saw that his antagonist was only a boy, a mere youth of but sixteen years of age and very beautiful, he was reminded of his own son and hesitated to take his life; but not being able to withstand the taunts of his companions for sparing a Taira, he killed the boy and sent his head and the ill-fated flute to his master, Yoshitune. But the deed eventually so preyed upon his mind that he renounced the world and entered a monastery where, as the monk, Renshō, he devoted the remainder of his life to Buddha.

Celebrated episodes pertaining to unusual feats of horsemanship are shown in the given illustrations. In one the distinguished warrior, Oguri Hangwan, reins his horse to the limited space of a Japanese checker-board, the *go* table. In another the strong woman, Kaneko, is holding a runaway

horse by putting her foot upon its dragging tether. And in the third the mighty Ko U, of the province of So, is overcoming the notoriously unmanageable horse, Usui.



From a woodcut by Tsukioka Masanobu. Kumagaya Challenging Atsumori

Among the gods who use the horse as a *vāhan* or mount is Kuvera, the Hindu god of wealth and the guardian of the northern quarter of the universe. Not only does this god sometimes ride the horse, but it is stated that the people of the region over which he presides are horse-headed. The roof-tile of an accompanying illustration may represent this deity, since such tiles were placed on the corners of buildings as a guard against evil spirits coming from the Four Cardinal Directions, or it may be intended for Liu Pei, afterwards the Chinese Emperor Chao Lieh Ti, jumping his horse Tokiro across the foaming river Dankei to escape assassination at the hands of his brother-in-law, who besieged the castle where he was being entertained.

In Japan, Bishamon, another form of Kuvera, is sometimes shown riding a horse, while Bareki-jin is the special protector of all horses.

As the horse is one of the signs of the occidental zodiac—where, as the archer, Sagittarius, it appears in the ninth house in the form of a centaur—so it likewise exists in the duodenary cycle of the Orient, where the twelve animals not only successively mark the years but the days and hours.

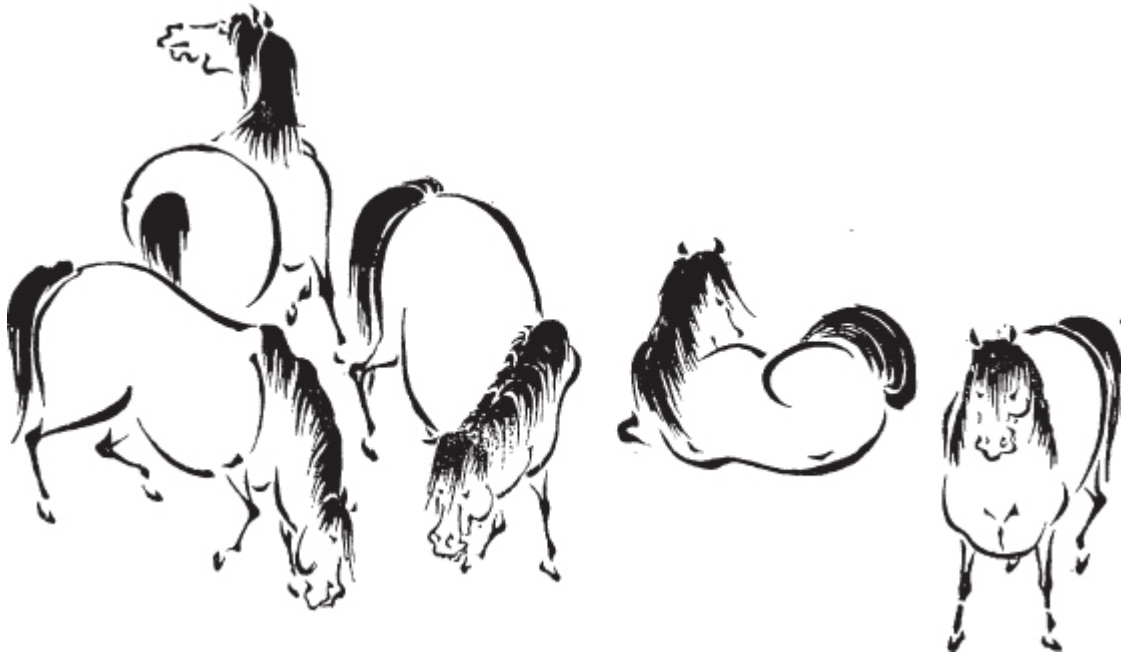
In the Orient, as in the Occident, the horse has been invested with the qualities of purity, nobility, and wisdom. In China, in particular, the high regard in which it was held is quite evident from the relation which it bore to the competitive literary examination. For the men of letters, who secretly coached the candidates for the ordeal, were called “horses,” the apartments where the tutoring was done, “horse-sheds,” while the students themselves were said to be “riding the horses.”

The horse has ever held an exalted place in the estimation of man. Sensitive, alert and intelligent, it has been not only his companion and friend, but a helpmate worthy of the consideration which the prophet Mohammed so ably expressed in the following, when apostrophizing it:

Thou shalt be for man a source of happiness and wealth. Thy back shall be a seat of honour and thy body of riches; and every grain of barley given to thee shall purchase indulgence for the sinner.

A TATAR HORSE FROM DERBEND, ALL SLIMNESS, MUSCLE, BONE;  
BY EARS ERECT LIKE BAMBOO SHOOTS ITS FIERY SPIRIT SHOWN.  
HOOFS SWIFT AS WIND THAT SPURN AT SPACE IN RAPID, LIGHT CAREER,  
FIT TO BE TRUSTED WITH YOUR LIFE IN PERIL FAR OR NEAR—  
AH, SINCE A STEED LIKE THIS YOU OWN OF SUCH A HAUGHTY STRENGTH,  
TO BURST ACROSS A THOUSAND MILES WERE BUT A JOURNEY'S LENGTH

—TU FU, A.D. 712-770.  
Fletcher Translation.



From a painting by Eitoku



## CHAPTER XV

# THE DEER AND THE GOAT

*On mountain peaks, in solitude,  
Abides the pure white deer;  
From lofty heights it greets the dawn  
Or waits the close of day.  
Among the pines of forests dense,  
The golden chih it seeks;  
And then, refreshed at cool jade streams,  
Lives on eternally.*



From a woodcut by Saiho

THE deer is known in China as *lu* and in Japan as *shika*. The particular species of the *Cervidæ* represented in the arts of these two countries is a small animal, shapely and graceful, whose coat in winter is uniformly brown in colour, but in summer becomes covered with white spots. Its distinctive feature is a patch of erectile white hairs on the buttocks, which, while ordinarily inconspicuous, expands, when the animal is running, into a chrysanthemum-like bunch and serves as an effective signal to its companions for flight. Only the male is horned, and his four-tined antlers are covered, when first grown, with a soft fur resembling red velvet.

Although the *lu* has not been given the honour of a position in the zodiacal circle it is nevertheless prominent in Chinese thought because it is the popular symbol of two very important factors of life, "longevity" and "income." The idea of longevity was doubtless suggested by the great length of life which tradition has ascribed to the creature; for it is said to live a thousand years, at the expiration of which time its coat becomes grey; then another five hundred years, when its fur turns snow-white; while an additional five hundred years causes its horns to turn black, denoting that it has attained immortality.

After it has successfully passed its first period of longevity, it subsists only on the *ling chih*, "sacred fungus," also a symbol of longevity, but in the later periods its only necessity is the crystal waters from cloudy mountain heights. Having become immortal, it consorts only with the genii, the



celestials who abide on the Hills of Longevity—a pavilioned rocky retreat in the Hsien Tu mountains—where no mortal is ever admitted.

Concerning this fairy deer, which is believed to be pure white, there are many poems. For example, Su Tung Pu writes:

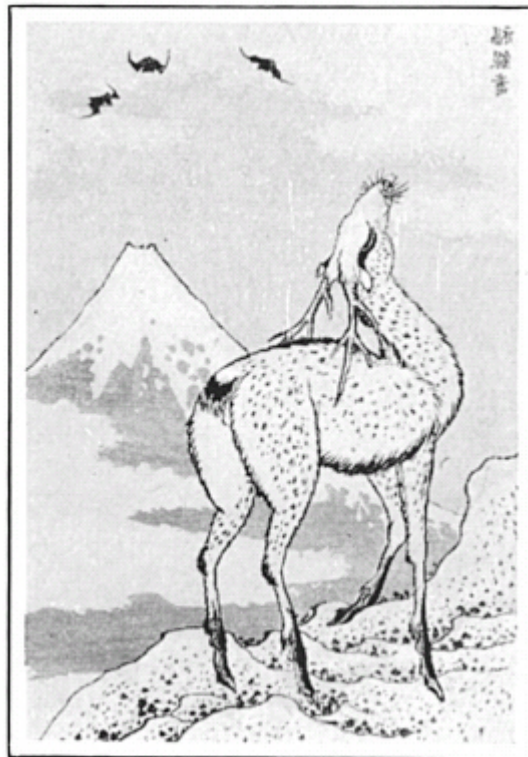
Time is short and the earth small, so the genii prefer to spend their lives in the sky. The deer, which they love, were left on the earth, lonely. They bleat toward the sky where their masters are, but cannot see them on account of the clouds. Therefore they run away and hide in the deep mountain caves where they no longer may be seen, and only their sad cries may be heard. While they are bereft of their celestial companions, they at least are no longer obliged to come in contact with this unclean world.

Again, Su She refers to them in the following lines:

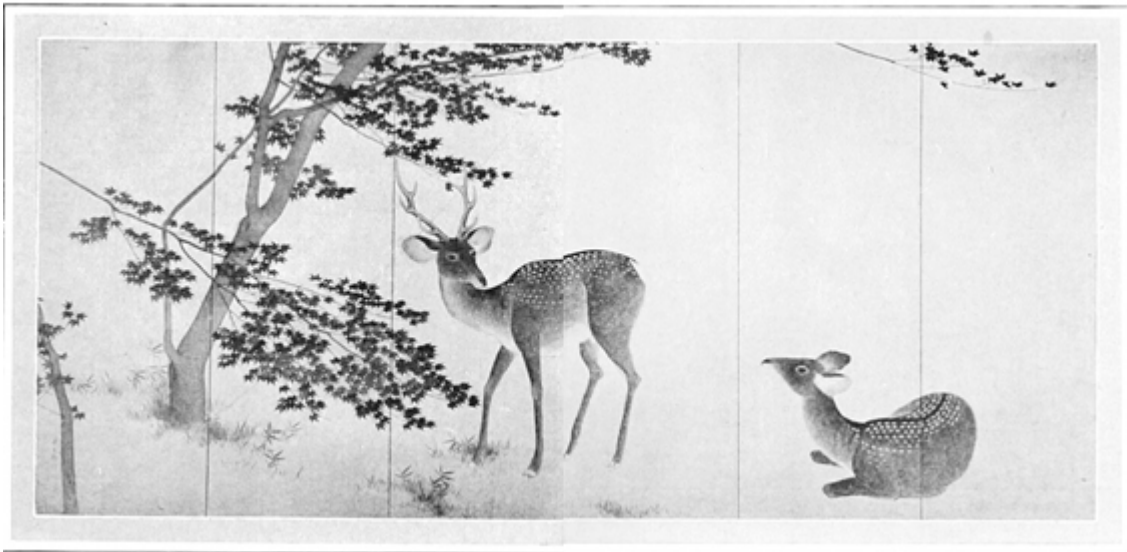
The winds are bitter cold this frosty autumn night: from out the moon's dense shadows comes the deer's sad cry. Why does it mourn? Is it lonely? Why has it been forsaken by its companions, the fairies of the mountain heights?

Hsueh Tsung of Wu dynasty, also writes:

Pure and bright is the white deer,  
Its soul is as its appearance.  
It seeks the hoar-frost and snow,  
And simulates the white feather of the wild goose.  
It is auspicious of a good year  
And carries a lucky message from beyond the skies.



From a woodcut by Hokusai



From a Japanese screen-painting by Keibun

Its association with mountain heights also led many a poet to give vent to poetic expression, as in the following lines by Chiao Tao:

The mountain peaks rise high toward heaven, and the deer in pairs come out from caves. With them there is one which has lost its mate. It is ever alone, but seems contented with its solitary life, for is it not free to roam about and drink the clear spring waters from the white-clouded mountains!

I choose a hermit's life to be among the deer, and lean upon my bamboo fence to see the passing herd. I saunter through the flowery paths with my gentle doe. It lifts its head and chews the tender leaves of willow or stoops to drink the crystal waters from the mountain stream. My deer and I live in peace until the prison of this life sends us to a freer place.—*Hsueh Huei*.

Following the path along the stream and enjoying the flowers, I passed the day with no companion nor guide. I know not the road in the mountains, but kind is the white deer which comes to meet me. As an old friend it leads me across a small bridge which is covered with shady bushes.—*Shih Chien Wu*.



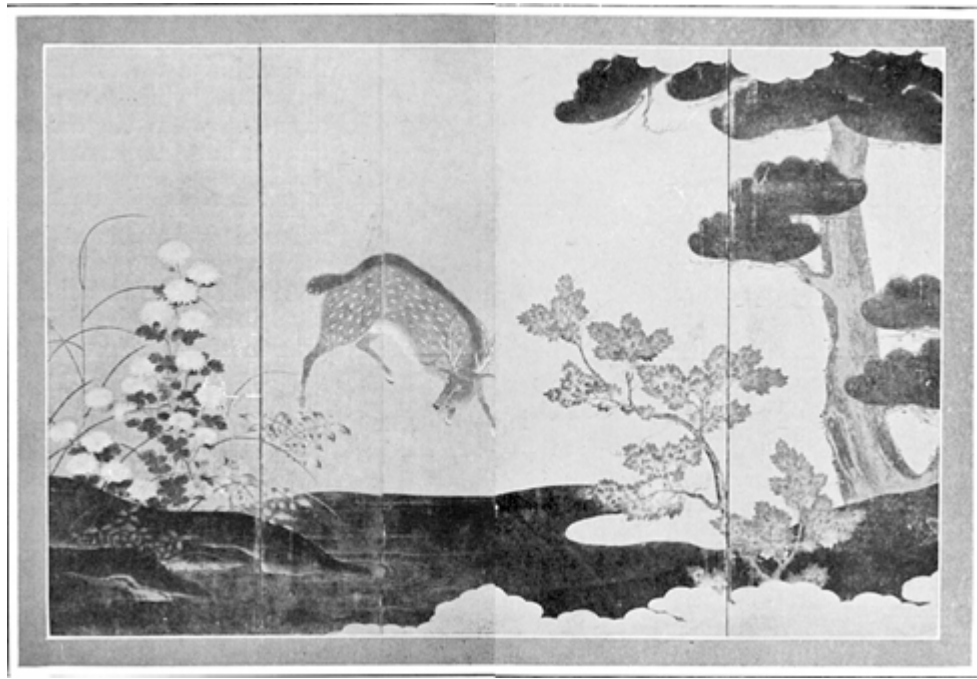
From the seal of Hiroshige



From a Japanese painting by Sōsen

This celestial creature was also regarded as being most beneficent and was ready to render aid when needed. Apropos of this, there is a legend which relates that when General Yang Yen Lan led his army against the barbarian tribes, his men were very much in need of water. Suddenly a white deer appeared, but thoughtlessly he shot it. However, instead of heeding the arrow in its body, it ran to a place and suddenly vanished. Then, to the surprise and delight of the general, at the *very* spot that the creature disappeared he found a bubbling well.

While Chinese literature generally refers to this sacred deer as being pure white, in the graphic arts when symbolizing longevity whether shown alone or as the attribute of Shou Lao, the god of longevity, or of Ma Ku, the handmaiden of Hsi Wang Mu, another immortal, it is of the spotted variety.



From part of a Japanese screen-painting attributed to Eitoku

A legend pertaining to its claim to longevity is given by Hsuan Hsieh Chili. He relates that the Emperor, Hsuan Tsung, of the T'ang dynasty while hunting captured a deer of unusual appearance which the priest Chung Kuo Lao claimed was nearly a thousand years old. When the Emperor questioned this statement, Chung Kuo Lao called his attention to a narrow band on the deer's neck which bore the inscription, "This deer was captured and then freed by Wu Ti of the Han dynasty, fifth year of Yuan Shou," making the animal just eight hundred and fifty-two years old.



From a Japanese painting by Seikō

The other significance attributed to the deer, that of “income,” is the result of a homophone in which the Chinese characters for “deer” and for “emolument” have the same sound of *lu*, as also those for “white deer” and “a hundred emoluments” have the same sound of *pai lu*. Verifying this symbology, Chi Shih Chan relates that he dreamed one night of finding eleven deer skins, and shortly after, he received eleven different emoluments.



From a woodcut by Hokusai

The spotted deer, therefore, whether shown alone or as an attribute to some god or sage, is a special decorative motive for ceremonial occasions when greetings, including wishes for prosperity and longevity, are expressed. It quite frequently is associated with the bat, as in the given woodcut of Hokusai, and, particularly in Chinese designs, has the *ling chih*, “fungus,” growing out of its head or held in its mouth.

Legends innumerable pertaining to the deer may be found in Chinese history prior to the fourth century. It was Ko Hung who wrote that the pure white stag, having reached immortality, had the power of self-transformation into any shape, and of manifesting varying qualities. Sometimes such a metamorphosis resulted in a highly benevolent creature which not only associated with and served both mortals and immortals, but even sought religious instruction with a view to attaining salvation through a life of asceticism. Again, another would have no purpose other than to amuse itself by mischievously teasing hermits at their devotions; while still another would be malicious and murderous in its intentions.

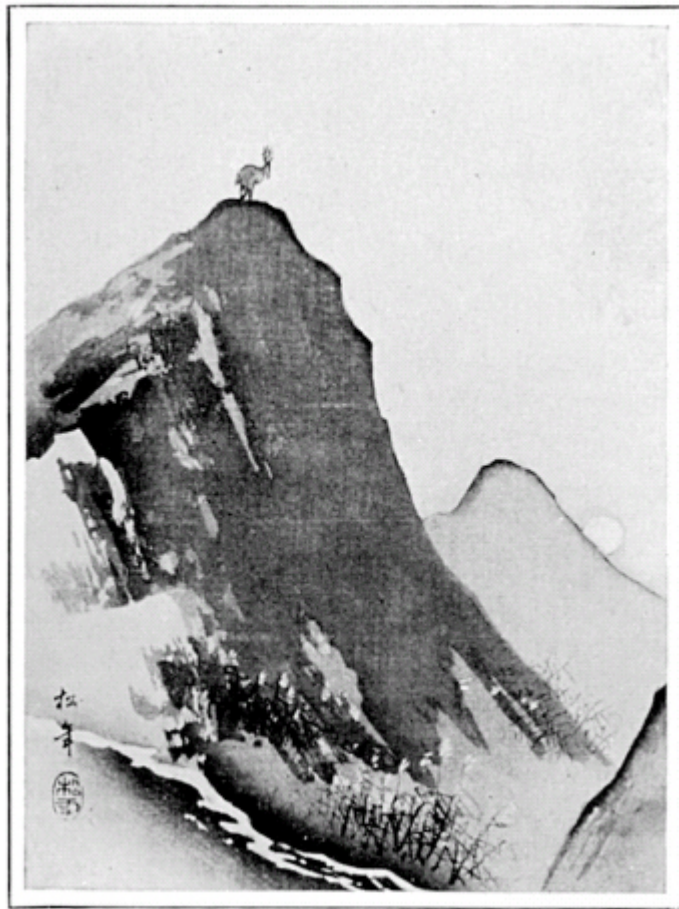




From a painting by Ch'ên Nan-p'in

Most of these legends are regarded as mere Taoist inventions to stop hunting and to prevent the destruction of the wild deer. Even in those remote times, men amused themselves with this ignoble pastime as they still do, and the deer of the mountains and marshes were ever fleeing from the hunter. Illustrative of such sport are Chinese descriptions of the stag hunts of the seventeenth-century Emperor, K'ang Hsi, who, from the number of animals he killed, must have been one of the agencies which came near exterminating the deer tribe in China. For by means of his decoy stag calls and his ring traps, operated by large companies of men, the deer were slain by hundreds, not only in the Imperial parks, but in wild resorts. That the animal must have existed in great numbers is evident from the traditional subject, "The Hundred Deer," which artists delighted to paint and which is shown in an accompanying illustration of a Chinese porcelain.





From a Japanese painting by Shōnen



From a Japanese screen-painting by Zeshin

Among these herds there must have been an occasional pure white deer, for in the ancient writings it is stated that the appearance of such a deer was regarded as a most auspicious omen of coming events, hence it was captured and sent to the Emperor.



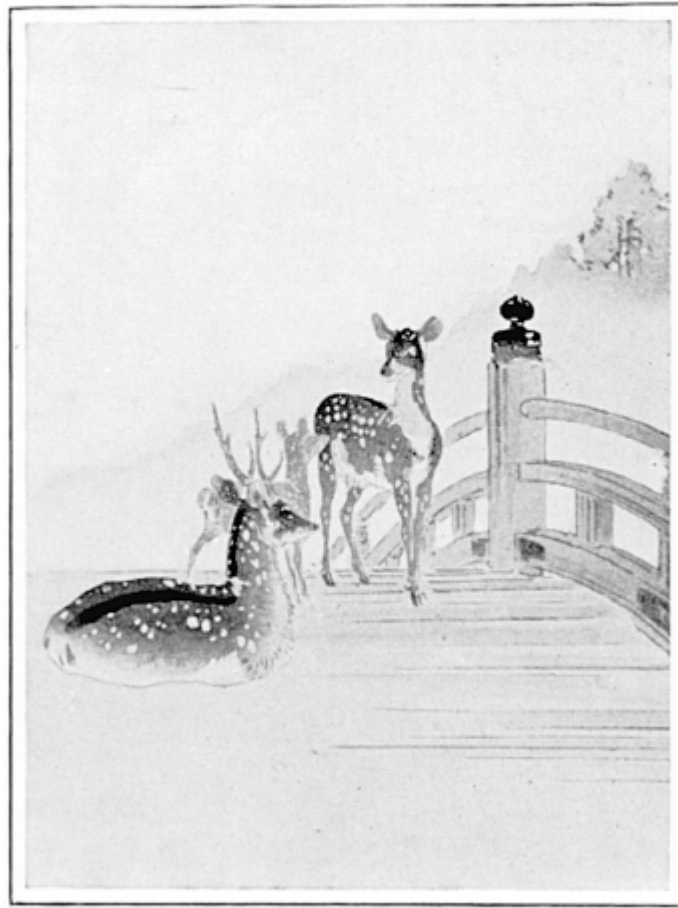
From an Indian painting. The Pet Deer

There is a tradition that deer were once used as steeds, and that at the time of the Yellow Emperor, Huang Ti (2697 B.C.), a thousand barbarians rode them when coming to pay their yearly tribute. Among the sages who thus use the deer are Tsao Kuo and Pieh Tsao (Jap. Dokyō and Hakudō), shown in an accompanying illustration. Of this pair it is related that they decided to become *sennin* and went to the mountains to study the art of magic. There they learned of a drug which had the power of conferring immortality. But its use was fraught with danger and the experiment was feared. Pieh Tsao at length made the venture and apparently died; Tsao Kuo then, naturally, hesitated to follow so disastrous an example, but finally concluded to join his friend. He, also, drank the potion and forthwith died. A fellow-student likewise desirous of becoming immortal watched the experiment and concluded to find some other method. But, before coming to a decision about it, he happened to be wandering over the mountains one day, when to his astonishment he saw Tsao Kuo and Pieh Tsao, each peacefully riding a pure white deer. Then he knew that his friends had not died; and he further realized that only those who do not fear consequences ever derive the benefits of the practice of magic.



From a Chinese porcelain, The Hundred Deer

Two other sages, Lu Nu Shêng, a female *sennin*, with an unnamed male friend, are shown riding in a chariot drawn by white deer. She lived in the Huo Shan mountains, where she subsisted exclusively on fruits and practised austerity. She appeared as a mere girl, but was over two hundred years old. Her friend was said to be a hundred years younger, but looked fifty years older. He visited her every third year, when the country people would see the pair riding about the country.



From a Japanese painting by Gekkō

The sage Wu Mêng (Jap. Gomō) is also represented with the deer. He is generally shown, as in the accompanying illustration, with his white feather fan of power—by which he creates the winds of heaven—and riding in a chariot drawn by two white stags. Wu Meng is also known as one of the Twenty-Four Paragons of Filial Piety, as which he is famous for having protected an aged mother from mosquitoes by lying unclothed before her couch, so that the pests might feed upon his own body. Another of these Chinese Paragons associated with the deer is Yen Tzu, known to the Japanese as Enshi. He went to the mountains in search of deer's milk for his sick mother and, in order to capture a doe, lay in wait, covered with the hide of a stag. He was unsuccessful, however, for before he decoyed the doe, he had lured a party of hunters who gave him a severe beating for having tricked them.

This animal is particularly noted for its amorous nature, and is ever conspicuous for its devotion to a mate. Its constant wail, when bereft of one, has led the Chinese to use its horn for the production of love potions; while, again, the long bushy tail of a certain species known as a *chu* is used by Taoist teachers while lecturing, just as the Buddhist priests use the cow's tail.





From an Indian painting. The Enchantress

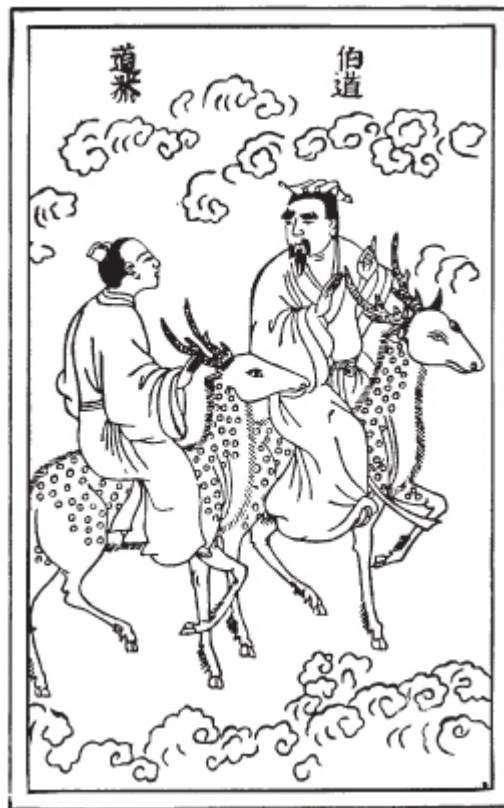
In Buddhism it occupies an important place, since Gautama was believed to have been incarnated eleven times as a deer and to have delivered his first sermon in a deer reserve in the vicinity of Benares, now known as Deer Park. For this reason in the earliest portrayals of his first sermon the *cakra*, "wheel of the law," is represented between two deer.

The Japanese, unquestionably inheriting all the traditions of the deer from China, are inclined to regard it in the same light, and while their hunters have well-nigh exterminated most of the wild life of the country, they have reared, tamed, and protected the beautiful creature in the temple parks of Nara, Miyajima and Kinkwa-zan until it abounds in great numbers, an ever-present delight, particularly to tourists who enjoy the novel experience of having a deer eat out of their hands.



From a woodcut by Kōrin. Fukurokuju





From a Chinese woodcut. The *Sennin* Tosa Kuo and Pieh Tsao



From a woodcut by Itchō. Jurōjin

The animal is commonly associated with the maple—the combination being known as *Hatsu momiji ni shika*—because in the autumn, when the maples are the most brilliant, the stag's forlorn cry

is constantly heard. This cry has been given several interpretations. By the poet it is designated as “The lament of the deer, the minstrel of the Maple grove,” significant of the lonely melancholy of the occasion. Hence he sings:

When the dead leaves fry, the deer’s sad cry our hearts with sorrow fills.

But, by the wag, the animal is known as *momiji dori*, “the maple warbler,” who, like the faithless lover, is:

As crazy as the deer, but as changeable as the maple.



From a woodcut by Shigenobu. The *Sennin* Huang Ch'u-p'ing

Another association with the deer is the *hagi*, a sort of bush clover which is at its best in the autumn, the pairing time of the deer, which frequent the groves of the shrub and feed upon it. Pertaining to this relationship, there is an ancient Japanese romance in which the deer is the lover and the *hagi* a fair maiden.



From a Chinese painting by Hsieh Hsi-fan. The Three Goats of Peace

There is also an amusing association of the deer and the horse known as *baka*, “fool.” The word is a combination of *ba*, which is another pronunciation of *uma*, the character for horse, and *ka*, an abbreviation of *shika*, for deer. Hiroshige, the celebrated print-designer, used, for one of his seals, a drawing illustrating this word, in which he combined the back view of a standing horse with the side view of a reclining deer, as shown in the accompanying illustration. This relationship of the deer and horse came from a well-known Chinese legend of the Chin dynasty which relates that Chao Kao, the eunuch of the Emperor, She Huang Ti, having been instrumental in placing the child Hu Hai upon the throne and desiring to learn who among the officials were to be trusted as his friends, presented a stag to the young sovereign, saying: “This, your Majesty, is a horse,” and when the doubtful Emperor questioned the officials regarding it, some, clever enough to see the ruse, replied, “It certainly is a horse,” but others, more truthfully inclined, remained silent and subsequently paid the penalty for their courage. From this incident the expression “to call a stag a horse,” which is still in use in common parlance, has become significant of “wilful misrepresentation.”



From a Chinese woodcut. The *Sennin* Wu Mêng





From a woodcut by Sensai. Ōkame

In Japanese folk-lore subjects, the deer always accompanies Tōbōsaku and Jurōjin, and sometimes Fukurokuju, all three of whom are counterparts, of the Chinese god of longevity, Shou Lao. Jurōjin and Fukurokuju are a source of considerable confusion to the occidental student, for each in turn is credited with \_being the god of knowledge and of long life, according to the whim of the artist. For the illustration of “Ōkame” by Sensai there may be given a double interpretation. The goddess of folly may be intended to impersonate the Chinese fairy Ma Ku, since not only is she clothed in a *kimono* decorated with the Chinese “bats of longevity,” but she carries the *jū-i*, the Taoist wand of power, made of the *ling chih*, and leads away the mythical stag. However, this composition may be a rebus representing Fukurokuju, by making Ōkame represent the character for *fuku*, meaning “good luck,” the deer, *mo*ku, “prosperity,” and the sacred fungus wand, *ju*, “long life.”

Among the Hindus, Soma or Chandra—the last of the Vedic gods and regent of the north-east quarter of the universe—rides an antelope. This is also true of Vayū or Parvana, the god of the winds and regent of the north-west quarter; while, among the Greeks, Diana, the guardian of mountains and groves, rides a car drawn by two stags, denoting the swiftness of the wind.

In Indian art the deer appears in a dual role; one as a religious symbol destined to promote spiritual growth, and the other as a mere tool for the sportsman to afford him amusement. In the former it is associated with woman as shown in the two given illustrations.



From a Chinese woodcut. The *Sennin* K'ao Yü

In “The Pet Deer” the fawn symbolizes the *maya*, “illusion,” by which the human soul is entangled. Although this gentle creature has escaped the dangers of the chase and the pitfalls prepared for its capture, it is still enthralled, for it is still attached to the beautiful maiden, for which reason the poet has thus addressed it:

Who has escaped the net of Nature, O bewildered deer?

The more you would wearily run, the more you are entangled therein.

This is also referred to in the Buddhist RATTHAPTALA, where it is stated that an individual who has become detached from all that is mortal and worldly is likened unto the deer for whom the trapper has laid his net in vain.

In “The Enchantress” the subject seems to be equally as symbolical as that of “The Pet Deer,” for here the Kakubha *Rāginī*, through her mystical dance, appears to be casting a magic spell upon both the deer and the fowl.

Both of these paintings are extraordinarily beautiful. The trees which conform so well to the other elements of the compositions are exquisite in themselves. The one in “The Enchantress” might well represent the jewelled trees of jade, crystal, and amber, that grow on the mythical Kw’ên Lun Mountains of Chinese lore. In combination with the figure of the *Rāginī*, it is a classic—an example of finality in design. Again, in the “The Pet Deer,” not only is the fawn represented in a most graceful form, but its large gentle eyes quite adequately express the spirit of the theme.

In the second rôle referred to, the deer appears in hunting scenes which represent the meets indulged in by royalty—subjects which were very popular in Hindu art. Reproductions of such paintings are historical records of the sports indulged in by the Emperor Akbar, which occurred in the neighbourhood of Agra, in 1568. In these paintings the monarch is shown sometimes on horseback and sometimes in ox-carts, directing the hunt or urging a cheetah upon a defenceless black buck, while herds of frightened deer are fleeing to cover in every direction. It is said that the Sultan Firoz-i-Khilji (1282-1296) popularized this sport, but it was Akbar who reduced it to a system. He not only trained the leopard for the chase, but likewise a tame deer which, with a net tied about its horns, was sent against a wild one so that the two fought with each other and became entangled, making it possible for the huntsman to capture the wild one. He also trained deer to hunt at night and return to their keepers when called. Then, again, he used strategical methods to entrap the animals, an important one being to conceal a hunter in a basket lit by a lamp, who rang tinkling bells. The deer, attracted by the light and the unusual sound, would advance and congregate about the place, thereby becoming an easy prey to their captors.

Another animal of oriental folk-lore, sometimes found among art motives, is the goat. In the Chinese painting by Hsieh Hsi-fan, a traditional subject known as San Yuan Ch’ên, “Three Peaceful Goats,” is shown. The significance of “peace,” attributed to the goat, is based upon another homophone in which the ideograph for goat and for *Yang*—the masculine principle of nature—have the same sound. Then, as the *Yang*—also regarded as the positive principle of good—is represented by the trigram, ☰, so three goats are painted to express a threefold or Great Peace for the whole world.

Among the Eight *Sennin*, Huang Ch’u-p’ing (Jap. Kōshohei) is associated with the goat. This sage when but fifteen years of age conceived the idea of becoming a *Sennin*, “a man of the mountains.” Being a goatherd, he was obliged to take his charges with him; but there he found a cave which afforded him the opportunity for the seclusion he required for meditation. In this, for forty years, he practised austerity and studied the art of magic. His brother, a priest, alarmed at his disappearance, searched for him for many years and finally found him, but without his goats. When questioned regarding them, he raised a stick and struck the stones lying around him on the ground, and instantly they were transformed into goats.

Huang Ch’u-p’ing is generally shown, as in the accompanying illustration, swaying his stick of magic over three goats.

Another worthy, also shown in an accompanying illustration, is the sculptor, K’ao Yü (Jap. Katsuyu). He raised goats for a living, and his love for his animals led him to reproduce them in stone. So great was his work that his sculptures became alive and showed their gratitude to their creator by carrying him to the Mountain of the Immortals.

Among the Hindus, Agni, the god of fire and guardian of the south-west quarter of the universe, is shown sometimes riding a goat and again a ram. This deity, which is most revered, is worshipped all over India for three consecutive days during the season when conflagrations are most feared. He is



represented as a golden-haired youth mounted on a blue animal, holding a spear in his right hand and wearing the Brāhmanical sacred cord and necklace of seeds. Sometimes he has three heads, seven arms and seven legs, symbolical of the sun's creative heat, its preserving light, and its destroying fire which rule over the seven days of the week.

The Orientals, however—with their keen discernment of beauty and their perception of animal traits—have never held the goat in the same sympathetic esteem that they have bestowed upon the deer; for this lovely creature of gentle mien and graceful form—whose swiftness has been likened unto the wind—has been given a distinct place in the world of beauty, inspiring many a poem and painting. Even occidental students, whose experience with wild animal life is limited to unhappy captures, may react emotionally to the expressive themes of painters of the Far East—such as the one by Shōnen herewith given—and conjure up visions which may tempt them to efforts at verse such as the following:

A clump of trees,  
A bit of brush,  
Within, two startled eyes.  
A sanely moor,  
A wide expanse,  
Beyond, a fleeing cleer.  
A mountain ridge,  
A safe retreat,  
A form, limned 'gainst the sky.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE MONKEY

*Through the crimson and gold of deep mountain forests,  
The white monkeys ramp like flying snow-flakes.  
At daybreak, they revel through swaying tree-branches  
And chatter in chorus with jubilant songsters.  
At noon, they are quiet and doze in cool shadows,  
But waken at twilight and join in a chase,  
To catch a bright moon-ghost adrift on some waves.*



From a painting by Kakunen

THE monkey appears in the art and folk-lore of most oriental countries, the native home of the simian species. Its name—which is said to have been derived from the sound of its chattering—in Chinese, is *hou*, and in Japanese, *saru*.

Concerning the many varieties of the monkey tribe—large or small; black, grey, and white; long and short-tailed—there are numerous traditions, all of which invest the creature with superhuman qualities and magical powers. As with most other animals, it is credited with the ability to attain great longevity and the power of transformation; and in accordance with the human custom in the Orient, at stated periods it acquires the dignity of a new name. For example: in the PAO PU TZŪ, it is related that when the *hou* is eight hundred years old, it becomes an *yüan*, then after five hundred years more it is known as a *ch'üeh ch'üeh*, and with an additional one thousand years it becomes a *ch'an ch'u*, under which name it may continue its life another three thousand years, when it assumes the form of an old man.

In a commentary in THE BOOK OF POETRY, the different kinds of monkeys are designated as the *nao*—which are very skilful in climbing trees, but exceedingly cautious and very excitable; the *Jcu'ei*, also known as *mu hou*—which most resemble the human family but are exceedingly covert; and the *jung*—which are small, light in weight, and have a long golden tail—an appendage which is

exceedingly useful, but also a source of great trouble to its possessor, for it is sought by hunters. But so wise is this little creature, that he discerns the purpose of his pursuers, breaks off the coveted member, leaves it on the ground, and makes good his escape.

The particular species found in the arts of China—notably in the paintings of Mu Ch'i, which have been much copied in Japan—are the long-armed, stubby-tailed, and short-faced gibbons family, the most active and intelligent branch of the monkey tribe. Such are shown in the accompanying illustrations of the paintings by Gahō and Tohaku.

Chinese literature, however, includes descriptions of long-tailed monkeys which—when finding distances too great for leaping—formed chains by which they were enabled to swing themselves from great heights across wide chasms. It was said the leader would wind his tail around a tree-bough, and the troops would take hold of each other's legs and extensive appendages until they formed a living pendulum. This, through their combined efforts, they would oscillate until it gained sufficient momentum to swing, thereby enabling the end monkey to seize a tree-bough on the opposite bank and complete a bridge over which not only the mothers and babies, but all their comrades, would scamper with great glee. Then the leader would relinquish his hold, and the line would swing from the opposite end, often breaking, obliging some to wade through the water, and frequently the last monkey would come to grief—for, as among men, all cannot swim with equal facility. From this circumstance has probably arisen the popular proverb, "The last monkey is sure to be drowned." Thus they would cross not only simple streams but raging torrents which they encountered in their perambulations. From this informal method of spanning a chasm the Japanese, as well as the Chinese, acquired the habit of calling their structures monkey-bridges. A notable example is the *Saruhashi* in the province of Kai, which Hiroshige, the celebrated landscape designer, has made famous by one of his coloured woodcuts.



From a screen-painting by Gahō

But this method of chain-making has likewise been employed to reach down from some lofty tree-top not only for foraging food or getting water, but for amusement—after the manner of human kind—by teasing other animals, or in vainly endeavouring to take hold of a glittering moon-reflection.



From a painting by Sōsen

These cunning crafty tree-dwellers were ever credited with having an unusual interest in the silvery orb of night. They are said to adore the new moon with extraordinary manifestations of delight, but are very sad when the luminary is on the wane.

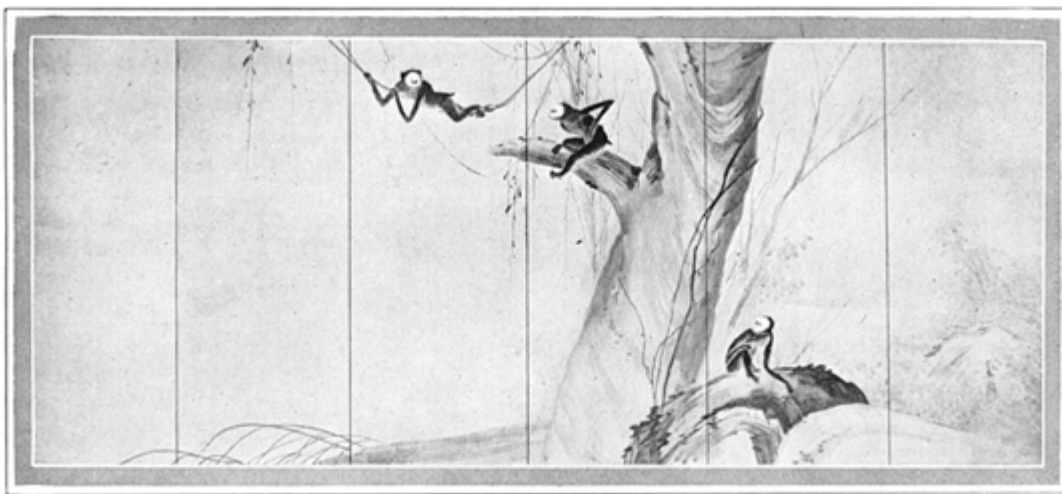
The ancient Egyptians had several moon-gods. They symbolized the moon by the *cyno-cephalus*, the dog-headed ape, a sort of baboon, because at the time of an eclipse of the moon it became extraordinarily distressed, bowing its body to the earth and lamenting loudly with a pitiful cry.



From a painting by Tohaku

That these characteristics of the monkey had early been discovered in the Far East is most evident from the paintings, both Chinese and Japanese, which depict the simian reaching upward after the real moon in the sky or downward towards its “unstable reflections on the waters. For these little brothers of mankind knew naught of the oriental philosophy so poetically given by Hearn:

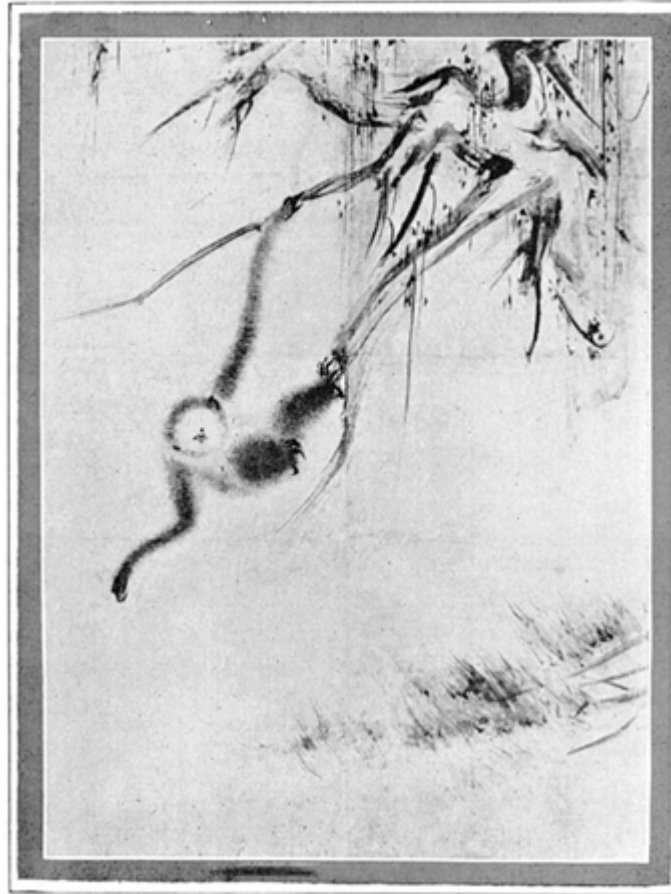
The water is the phantom flux of sensations and ideas; the moon, not its distorted image, is the sole truth. In this world of illusion, man is truly still the ape trying to seize on water, the reflection of the moon.



From a screen-painting by Gahō



But while the æsthetically inclined might attribute the ape's interest in the moon to an unconscious love of things beautiful, the Buddhists have seen in it only an expression of covetousness, and have employed it to illustrate their doctrine. Hence, the monkey is included among those they designate "The Three Senseless Creatures": the tiger, which is always angry; the deer, which is always love-sick; and the monkey, which is always greedy and grasping—for which folly he frequently pays the penalty, particularly when he reaches after the moon-reflection and is drowned.



From a painting by Tohaku

The worship of the monkey has prevailed in China since the T'ang dynasty, when it was deified in return for services which a particular ape—Sun Wu K'ung—rendered to the Buddhist priest, Yuan Chuang, during his quest in India for the SACRED SCRIPTURES. The Emperor conferred upon this animal the title of "The Great Sage Equal to Heaven," but he is likewise referred to as "His Excellency the Holy King." His birthday, which occurs on the twenty-third day of the month of the second Chinese calendar, is celebrated, by all classes of society, not only in temples erected to his worship, but also at shrines placed in the walls of buildings, at the corners of streets, and at the heads of alleys and lanes.





From a painting by Kotei

The legend which has immortalized the life of this monkey-king is known as HIS YU CHI (Jap. SAI-YŪKI), "Record of the Travels of the West." In it, Yuan Chuang (Jap. *Sanzō Hōshi*) is described riding a white horse, the *pai hu* (Jap. *hakuba*), a creature which for his misdeeds as a dragon had become thus incarnated.



From a painting by Sōsen



From a carving attributed to Hidari Jingorō. The Three Mystic Apes

During the journey the priest attached to himself successively three followers: this monkey, Sun Wu K'ung (Jap. Songoku); a boar-headed man named Chu Pa-chieh (Jap. Chohakkai); and the demon, Sha Ho Shang (Jap. Shagogyō).

The monkey became the ally and chief protector of the priest in gratitude for having been rescued from a cave where he had been confined for three thousand years, subsisting there exclusively upon molten iron. It happened that, as the priest was passing the cave, he saw the plight of the poor beast, and in pity appealed to Yü Ti (Jap. Gyoken Tai), the Great Lord of Heaven, for the creature's release. The prayer was answered, but when the cave burst asunder and the monkey stepped forth Kuan-yin (Jap. Kwannon), the goddess of mercy, appeared and told the priest that the monkey was liable to give him trouble. She therefore placed on the creature's head a *ku*, an iron band which, when exorcized by

the formula and gesture she taught the priest, would cause the monkey great pain and restrain him when he became unruly.



From a coloured woodcut by Shinsai. Bringing New Year's Greetings

It appears that Sun Wu K'ung—whom the monkey tribe selected for their king—was indeed a remarkable being, for he was neither man nor beast, but born of the earth during a great natural convulsion. He is said to have had eyes of such brightness that, like a searchlight, they pierced the very heavens and startled the heavenly king, in consequence of which he was invited to pay a visit to the celestial regions. But once there, he discovered and ate of the fabulous peaches which not only conferred upon him immortality, but a knowledge of magic. This he exercised to such an extent that he became a serious menace to the heavenly hosts, even threatening to usurp the throne, and the king was forced not only to banish him to earth, but to imprison him in the rock-bound cave lest he likewise might injure mortals.

The boar-headed man—a being of quite a different order—was a youthful, frivolous individual, who likewise was banished to earth on account of his indiscretions. He had no stability of character and ever lost his wits at the sight of a woman.





From a woodcut by Kōan. The Foolish Monkey

The demon was a river spirit which had been exiled from heaven because he had eaten human flesh, in consequence of which crime he was obliged to wear a necklace of human skulls.



From a coloured woodcut by Kyōsai

All three of these creatures had magical powers, but Sun Wu K'ung was the greatest of them all. He knew seventy-two different forms of magic and could assume nine thousand different transformations. He could ride the clouds, turn a somersault of six thousand miles, see to the farthest

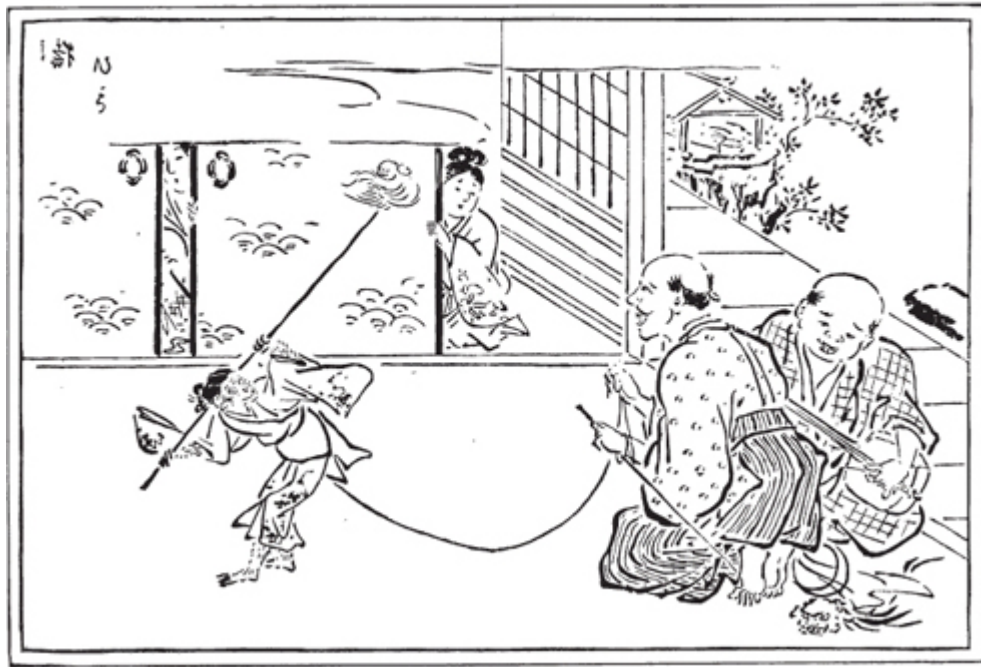
point of the universe with closed eyes, and hear the world mutterings. He possessed a magic wand which he could diminish to the size of a needle and carry in his ear or, when needed, could lengthen in any of the four directions until it reached to the outer limits of space or touched the lowest depths of the under-world. In his capacity as chief aid to the priest he could raise an army of monkeys to fight the demons they encountered on their way, by merely plucking a handful of hairs from his body and blowing his breath upon them, when they became transfigured into full-sized apes.

Then by a similar process he would change such hairs into innumerable doubles of the priest, who, collectively, would undergo the series of “nine times nine trials” imposed upon him as a test of his holiness. Again, he would breathe upon a single hair and make himself invisible.



From a painting by Sōsen. Bearing the Sacred *Shintai*

The journey was fraught with great perils, and many were the battles fought, but the monkey was ever able to extricate the company. Eventually, after seventeen years of varying vicissitudes of fortune, not only was the little company able to bring back triumphantly to China six hundred and fifty-seven volumes of the HOLY SCRIPTURES, but the three faithful followers of the priest were converted to Buddhism and became his disciples.



From a woodcut by Itcho. The Travelling Showman

Another legend exclusively Japanese, but undoubtedly based upon the foregoing romance, is that of Momotarō, one of the oldest of the nation's fairy tales. In this, a youth goes in quest of treasure to Devil's Island and is accompanied by a monkey, a dog, and a pheasant. He likewise is successful in his enterprise, but the trophy of his undertaking consisted of the precious symbols of coveted human power, while that of the priest was the vehicle for man's spiritual uplift and growth.

Sun Wu K'ung, as shown in the accompanying illustration of a Chinese porcelain, wears the *ku*, has a fabulous peach under one foot and holds another in his hand. Such images, not only in porcelain but carved in wood and gilded, are common throughout China to-day.

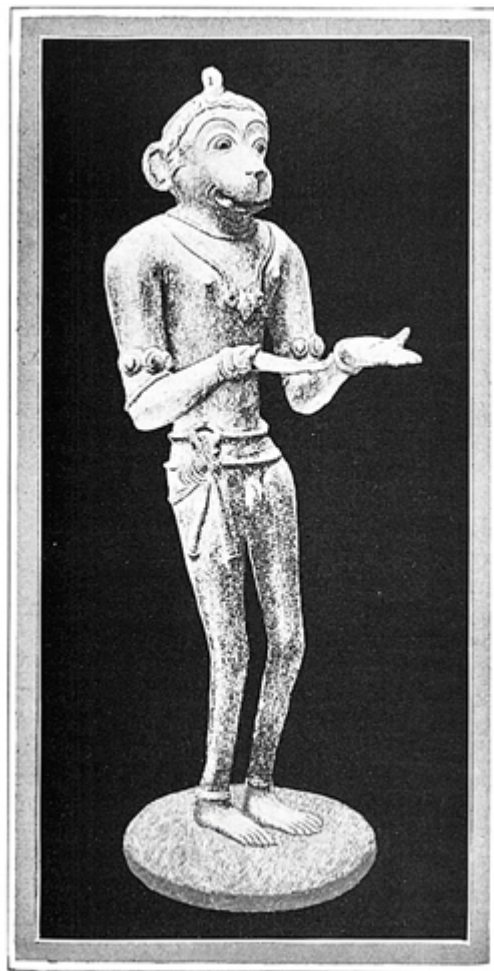




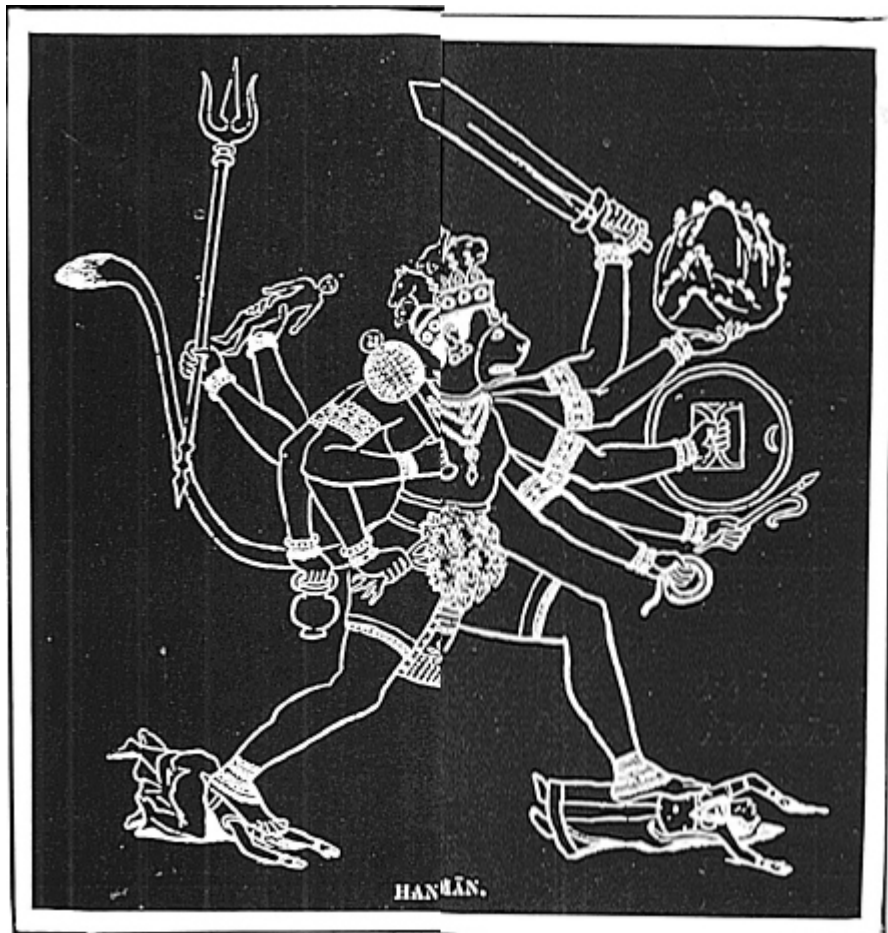
From an Indian painting by Venkatappa. Rama Sending his Signet Ring by Hamimān

The monkey is also associated with the horse. This is doubtless due to their proximity in the duodenary cycle of animals—in which the monkey occupies the ninth house and the horse the seventh—as well as to their all too evident different characteristics, so well defined by the proverb, “The heart is like the monkey, while the head is like the horse,” significant of the difference between human feeling and human thought.

In Japan, the best known work of art having a monkey motive is that of the wood carving attributed to Hidari Jingorō, shown in the accompanying illustration entitled “The Three Mystic Apes.” It is a *ramma*, occupying a place over the entrance of the *umaya*, “stable,” at Nikkō, which houses the sacred white horse kept at the temple for the use of the gods, and is another application of the zodiacal relationship of the horse and the monkey.



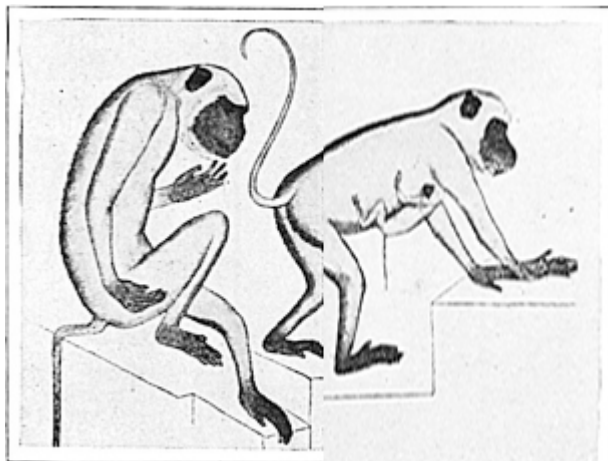
From an Indian copper image. Hanumān.



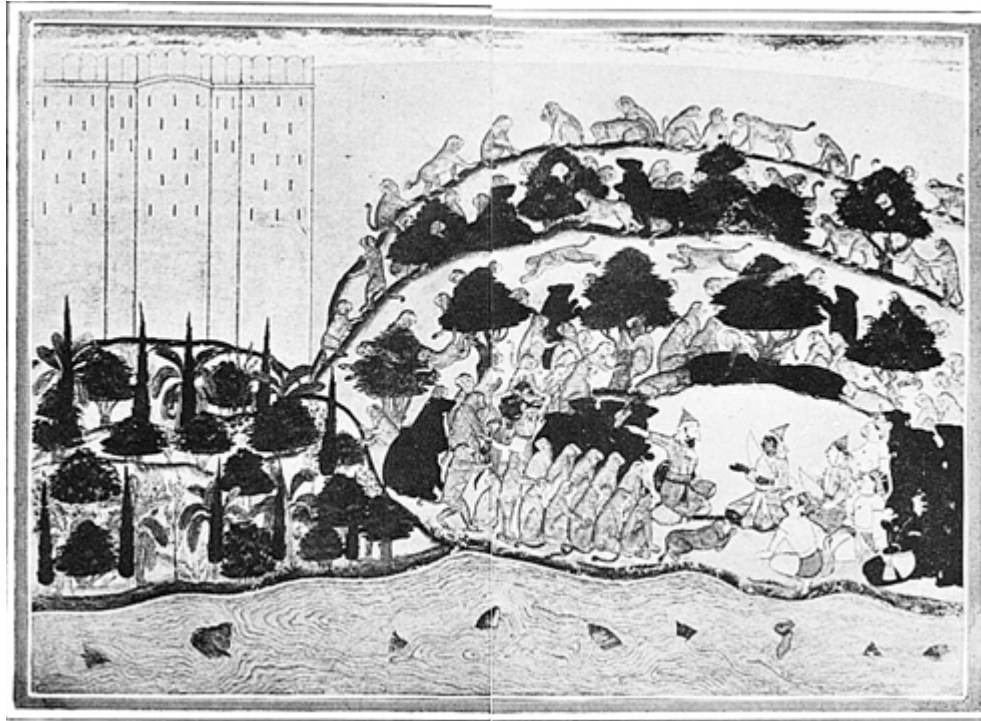
From an Indian drawing. Hanumān with his Attributes

The Three Mystic Apes, known as *Sambiki Saru*, are of Buddhist origin and designed to warn humanity against the three principal temptations. They are known as *Iwazaru*, the “no speaking”; *Mizaru*, the “no seeing”; and *Kikuzaru* the “no hearing” monkeys who in these three ways defy evil. Here again is a homophone, where the word *zaru* has the double meaning of “monkey” and “not,” which is so ably expressed in the poem:

*Iwazaru ya mizaru kikuzaru hana no sola,*  
I would not speak, nor see, nor hear of the flowers of this world.



From a fresco of the Indian Caves at Ajanta



From an Indian painting The siege of Lankā

The *Sambiki Saru* are the attendants of Kōshin, the god of the roads, and are also sometimes regarded as three different manifestations of the deity who was sent to the world to free it from disease. Hence, upon the occurrence of an epidemic such as a plague, Kōshin's picture, a monkey-headed man, painted by the priests, is nailed over the doorways of houses to keep out the evil influences. Temples to Kōshin are not common. Hearn describes one on the road between Kamakura and Enoshima where there is a statue of the god which is quite markedly Hindu in character. It has three eyes and six arms which hold respectively a monkey, a serpent, a wheel, a sword, a rosary, and a sceptre. Serpents are coiled around the wrists and ankles, and under its feet is the head of the demon, Amanagaku. On the pedestal of the statue, the Three Monkeys are carved, while another monkey is placed in the tiara on the god's head. Then near this temple there is a small shrine under a bamboo shed, where six images of Kōshin appear on chiselled slabs, under each of which again appear the Three Mystic Apes. Another Shintō deity having a monkey for an attendant or messenger is Ōkuninushi, the original deity of Izumo, who resigned his throne in favour of the Mikado's ancestors when they came down from heaven to rule Japan. This deity is worshipped under the title of Sannō *Gongen* at the large Shintō temple of Sannō or Hiyoshi, at Kami Sakamoto in the vicinity of Kyōto; and of Hiye *Gongen* at another Shintō temple of Sannō at Asakasa near Tōkyō. Here, in place of the usual *Ni-ō* "gate guardians," are placed seated monkeys wearing large bibs. Then, again, at the temple, this animal bearing the sacred *gohei*, "august offerings to the gods," appears among the altar furnishings. The monkey in the latter guise is represented in the given coloured woodcut by Shinsai, notwithstanding that he is, upon this occasion, the bearer of New Year's greetings, in which service he enrolls every twelve years. The companion illustration of the opposite page represents the august messenger, carrying the *tama*, which in this instance appears to be the *shintai* or symbolic object through which a worshipper may come in direct contact with the god.





From an Indian painting by Venkatappa. Hanumān with his Burning Tail, Setting Fire to Lanka

In the woodcut by Kōan, entitled “The Foolish Monkey,” another old Chinese legend has been illustrated. Herein, a monkey-dealer, fretting under the high cost of living, informed his charges that he would be obliged to feed them on a diet exclusively of potatoes, and would give to each three in the morning and four at night. At this they protested—as shown in the illustration, where one angrily returns the first offering—thereupon, the crafty vender said, “Very well, if you insist, I shall give you four in the morning and three at night,” to which they foolishly assented.

Other legends quite frequently illustrated are “The Monkey and the Jelly-Fish,” and “The Monkey and the Crab.” In the former, the monkey fully justifies his reputation for being very wise by the manner in which he escapes the jelly-fish, which has been sent to get the liver of a living monkey to be used medicinally for the ailing Dragon King, Ryūjin. In the latter, however, quite the reverse was the case, for he was outwitted by a crab which, desiring revenge for an offence and unable to cope with so large and powerful a creature, cleverly used an egg, a bee, and a pestle and mortar, and completely routed him.



From a Chinese porcelain. Sun Wu K'ung.

The chief home of the cult of the monkey, however, is in India. There the reverence entertained for it began in antiquity and still continues. For its magical influence, by which it is thought to ward off every form of evil, is so widely believed in, that it is not only permitted to roam at will, but is fed and protected. Hence it has become most prolific, particularly in the vicinity of temples, such as at Benares, where devotees keep it well supplied with the necessities of life, in return for which it affords them much amusement.

In western India, particularly where monkey worship prevails, wealthy nobles have, upon a number of occasions, bequeathed grants of land to be devoted exclusively to the maintenance of these wild creatures. It is therefore not surprising that they swarm over the country, a constant source of annoyance to the natives. Tourists, on the other hand, have been greatly entertained by the troops of langurs—the white-whiskered, black-faced, long-tailed apes—which come bounding with a mighty air to see the railroad trains pass; or, while tramping through the forests, watching the many antics of the monkeys—carrying their young, chattering excitedly, and making faces at their onlookers while skipping through the trees.

In the towns these free monkeys have become a great trial, for to kill one is regarded as an abominable act of sacrilege, the punishment for which is said to be nothing less than to be incarnated as a monkey in the next life. Upon one occasion a crusade was conducted against the creatures. They were caught, caged, and carted to a remote region, but this did not prove effective, for they soon found their way back.

The principal interest held for the monkey in India, however, centres itself around the monkey-god, Hanumān, whose pictures and images abound in every part of the country. Hanumān was



unquestionably the precursor of Sun Wu K'ung, for the characteristics of the two gods are similar, although the Chinese monkey-god seems to have outgrown his prototype.

Hanumān as the son of the wind-god, Vayū, had divine origin and superhuman powers. He is described as having a form as vast as a mountain, a tail that swept the sky like a comet, and eyes that flashed like forest fires. But he had one deformity, a shattered cheek, which was caused in his youth by a stray thunderbolt from Indra, the storm-god. This so angered the boy's father that he kept the winds blowing incessantly until appeased by a promise from Brahmā, that not only should the boy never again be struck by bolt, but that he likewise should never be slain in battle.

Hanumān could leap into infinite space and course through the air like a winged *Garuda*; even as a child—mistaking the rising sun for a fruit on a tree—he sprang three hundred leagues to clutch it. He had the power of assuming any shape and size, so that when the malignant cobra strove to swallow him, he swelled himself until he extended its jaws a hundred leagues from ear to ear, then causing himself to shrink to the size of a thumb, he crept into its jaws and escaped through its ears.

He also was said to be so learned that he rivalled the preceptor of the gods. But it is in the RĀMĀYANA—the Hindu epic relating to the romance of Rāma and Sītā—that he figures most conspicuously. There, he first appears crossing the straits between India and Ceylon at a single bound, in search of the abducted wife. Then, having found Sītā, he presents to her the signet-ring of her lord and, to prove his presence, he destroys half of the city—after the manner of his father, the wind-god—but is captured. On the claim that he is an envoy from Rāma seeking terms for Sītā's release, he is given his liberty, but only after his tail has been set on fire. This he then uses as a wand to burn the city, and in a very short time half of Lankā is laid waste. He next appears as one of the chiefs of the army of monkeys and bears, which first built a bridge across the straits and then beseiged Lanka. He ever acts as messenger between Rāma and Sītā, and when the war is over and Rāma, victorious, returns with Sītā, he doubly rewards Hanumān, first by allowing him to accompany him, and then by conferring upon him the boon:

Thou shalt live on the earth as long as the deeds of Rāma are related among men.

## SONG OF SORROW

LISTEN! OUT THERE IN THE COUNTRY WHITENED  
BY THE MOON, HEAR THE MONKEYS WEEPING  
AS THEY CROUCH ON THE ABANDONED TOMBS.

—LI-TAI-PO, T'ANG DYNASTY.  
Joerissen Translation.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE BOAR

*Fierce and most merciless of beasts,  
Sullen burrower of the earth.  
Roaming through dense forests,  
Wallowing in murky swamps,  
Ravishing field and vineyard ;  
Felling low, with cruel tusks,  
All that impedes the way ;  
The despair of the farmer,  
The terror of all life—*

*The wild boar!*



From a painting by Kakunen

THE boar is indigenous to both Japan and China. In Japan it is known as *i* and *inu-shishi*; in China its common name is *shan ch'u*, "mountain pig," but in literature its appellation is *hao chih*, while in the KU CHIN SHIT, an ancient book, it is referred to as the *chang hui ts'an chu*, "long-snout military officer," because its savage and ferocious nature is akin to that of the human fighter.

In a number of legends it is said that a great warrior is an incarnate boar. For example, in the YI CHIEIST CHIH it is related that Yeh Fei, a famous general of the Sung dynasty, spent his early youth in the company of a Buddhist priest who, recognizing in the boy the spirit of a boar, foretold not only his future career but also his premature death, which, he said, would be caused by a premier on account of jealousy. Eventually these prophecies came true, and immediately following Yeh Fei's death, the premier had a horrible dream in which he was attacked by a boar-headed man. So realistic was this experience that he was unable to recover from the effect and died within a very short time.

Again, the CHI FU T'UNG CHIH refers to another premier who, while hunting, killed a large boar and then feasted on its flesh. That night, in a dream, he was visited by a very large man, who thanked him for releasing his spirit from the pig which had held it, and informed him that now he would be reborn in human form and become a great warrior. On the following day, the premier received word

that one of his concubines had given birth to the child who, in later years, became one of China's foremost generals.

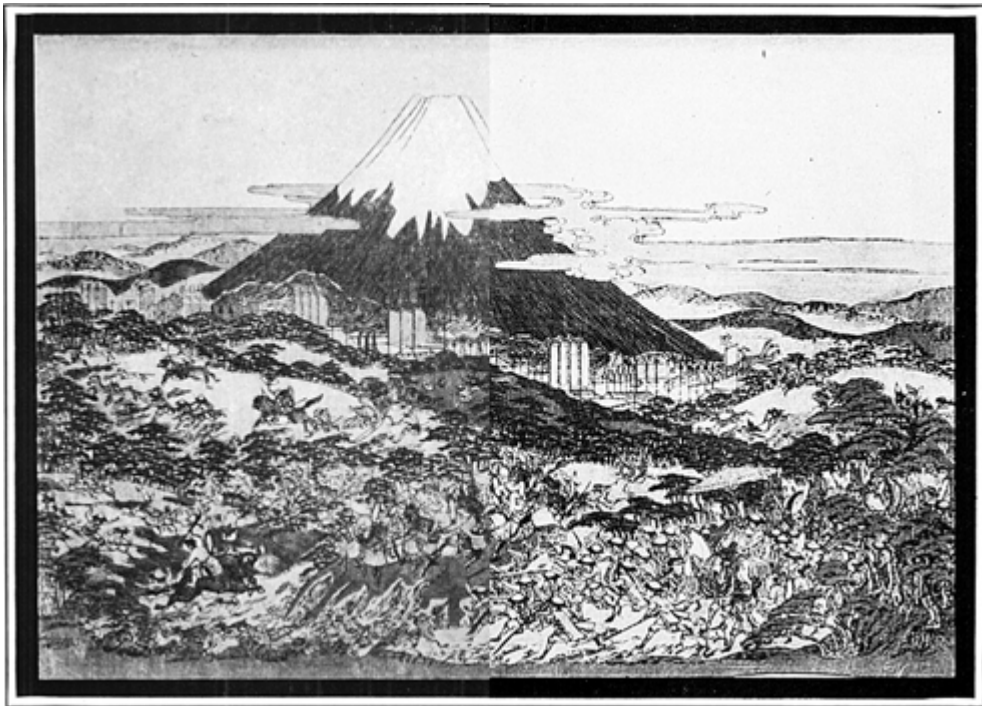
In Japan, the country where the warrior occupies so exalted a position, it is not surprising that the boar should be also idealized for its fighting qualities. Not only has it become the symbol of courage, but of sturdy steadfastness, for it is known to fight straight ahead, unflinchingly, striking at everything, never turning aside to flee, but meets its antagonist, attacks him, and holds his position.

Hence it has come to be associated with the idea of conquest, following the Zoroastrian idea in which Verethraghna, the god of victory, is represented by the form of a boar.



From a woodcut by Shigenobu

But the Japanese also see in the creature qualities of quite a different character, for they say it is a wild and foolish beast that rushes senselessly ahead, attacking without reason everything in its path; hence their proverb, "as crazy as a wild hog."

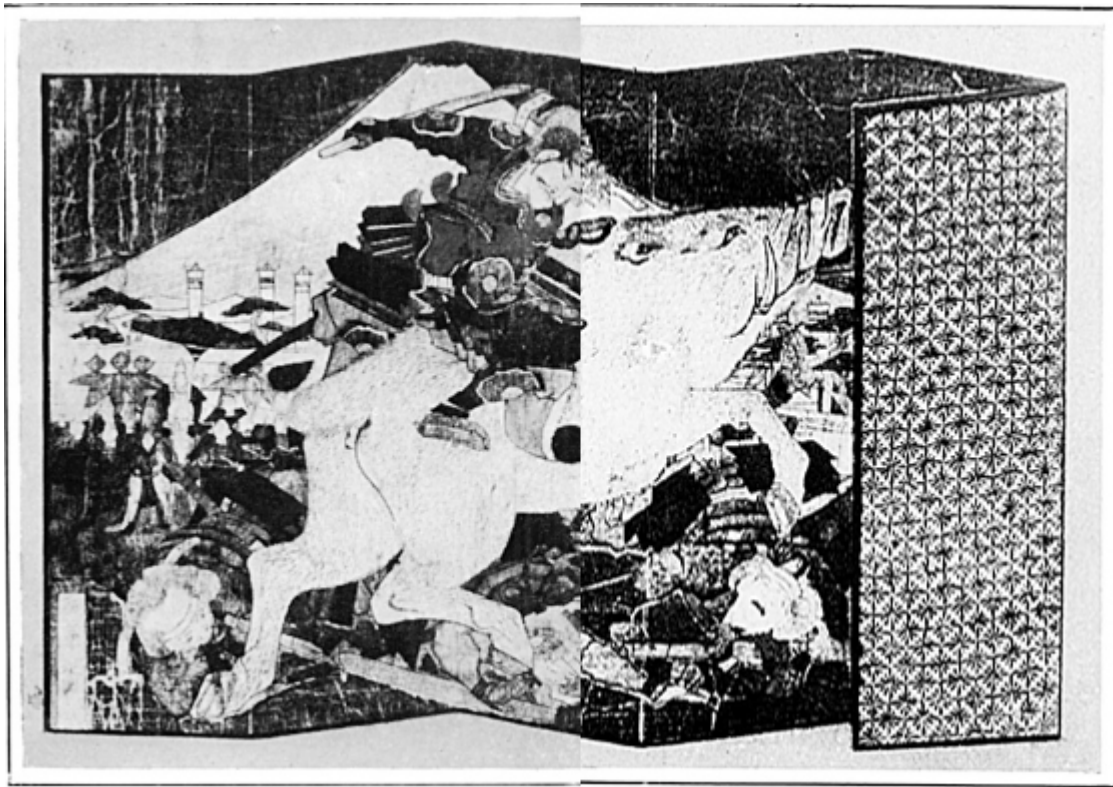


From a coloured woodcut by Toyoharu. Yoritomo's Hunting Party Around the Base of Fuji no Yama

In China, the pig, being so extensively associated with food, made no appeal to the æsthetically inclined, and is therefore only found in the arts as the attribute of some deity. But in Japan, although not generally popular, it has been used as a subject by some painters.

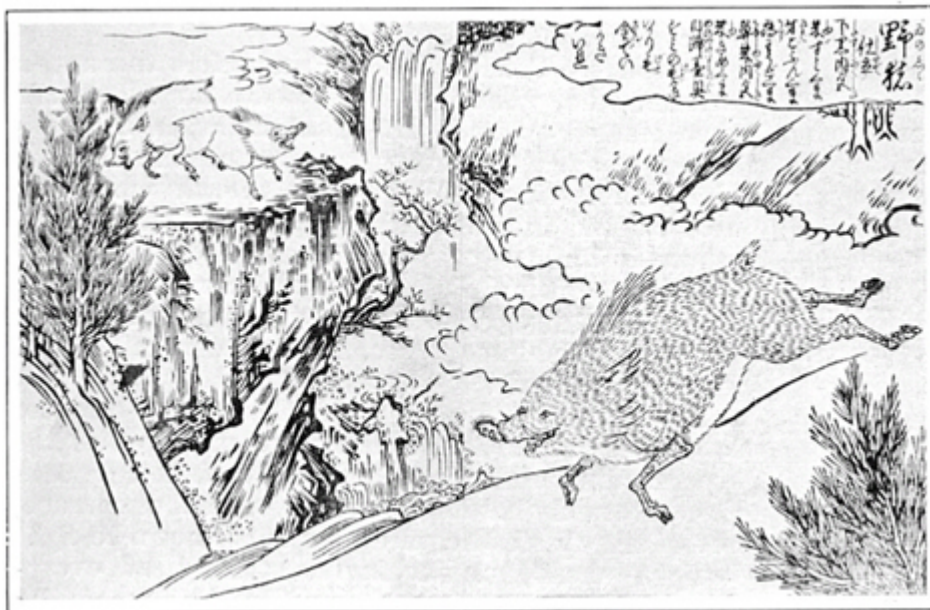
The legend of Ōkyo's painting of "The Sleeping Boar" is known to every Japanese, although none as yet has ever admitted seeing the picture or even a copy of it. The story of this work of the great master of the Maruyama school is, that he thought he had represented a boar asleep, but a woodcutter, who was familiar with the animal and its habits, informed the painter that his boar was dead, explaining that when this creature is asleep its legs and tail are always drawn under its body, a fact that was not portrayed in the picture. Ōkyo disputed this information, but became convinced of its truth when, on the following day, returning to the forest, he found the boar still there and in the same position—but dead.





From a *Surimono* by Sadaoka. Shiro Killing A screen-painting of Nitta no the Wild Boar

One of the most popular subjects associated with this animal is that of “Nitta no Shirō Killing the Wild Boar.” This warrior was one of the party of Yoritomo’s famous hunt in the wilds surrounding Fuji no yama. It is related that Nitta sprang upon the back of the running creature and plunged his short sword into the brute’s neck.



From a woodcut by Morikuni

This subject is shown in the accompanying illustrations by Toyoharu, Sadaōka, and Tsukioka Masanobu.

The boar is often represented as the companion of the fabulous Kintarō, “The Golden Boy,” also familiarly known as Kintoki, a wild child of the forest, who had such strength that he could wrestle with all the beasts as well as with the genii of the woods. He is a favourite theme of artists, who represent him fighting no lesser adversaries than the boar or the bear, and playing with the hare, the deer, and the monkey. He likewise associates with the *tengu*, the mythical creatures, half human, half bird, who dwell in the mountain forests. In the illustration by Shunshō, Kintarō, with one foot holding a bear down to the ground, is throwing a boar; while in the one by Shigemaru he seems to be settling some dispute with a young *tengu*.

The boar is often shown as the steed of the *tengu* king, Sōjōbō, also known as *Dai Tengu*. This mythical personage is closely related to the history of one of Japan’s most noted and revered characters, Yoshitsune, who, as a youth under the name of Ushiwaka, was said to have dwelt in the *tengu* camp, and there received the education which prepared him for his famous career. In the illustration by Kuniyoshi, one of the world’s greatest graphic interpreters, Sōjōbō, appears to be umpiring a contest in which Ushiwaka is holding at bay a number of the *tengu*; while in the one by Sukenobu, the *Dai Tengu* himself seems to be acting as the youth’s instructor in the art of fencing.

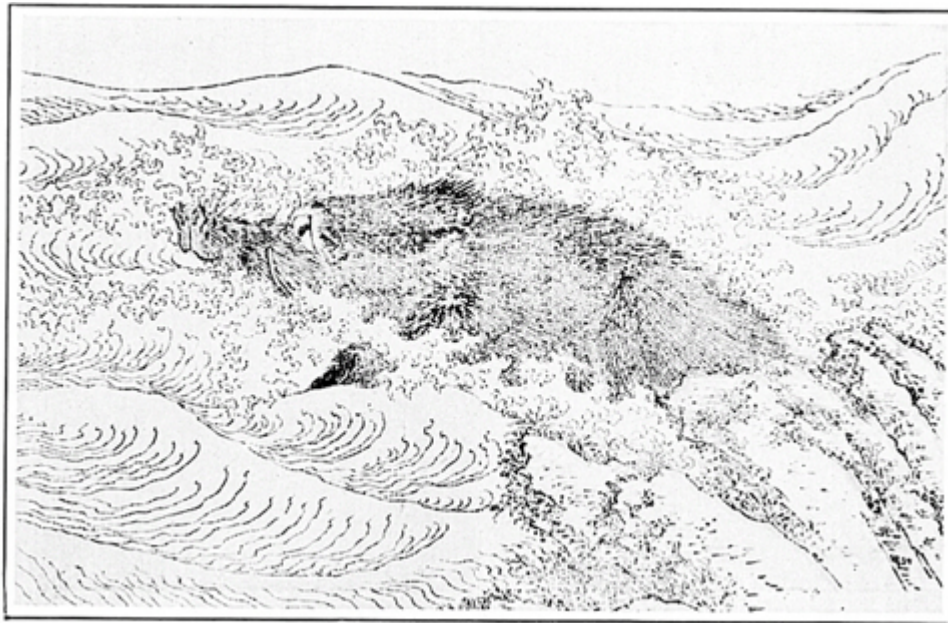


From a painting by Ōkyo

Among primitive peoples the wild boar appears to have had a most prominent place, for pig worship prevailed with many tribes of Asia and Africa, where the animal was regarded in the light of a benefactor. It not only supplied man with food and gave him the pleasures of the chase, but it has been the means of bringing to him deliverance from one of his most subtle and terrible enemies—the death-dealing serpent.



The pig is one of the greatest enemies of the snake, being able to destroy it. It is said that at the sight of the reptile the pig, without fear or hesitation, rushes at it, and unless the snake is successful in making its escape, it always succumbs to the attack. This animosity has been recognized even in the United States, where domesticated pigs have been used to clear some sections from rattlesnakes.



From a woodcut by Hokusai

As a food, the flesh of the wild boar, as well as of its descendant, the domesticated pig, has with many peoples been regarded as wholesome and savoury. Indeed, by some it was a special delicacy and desirable as a regular article of diet, although among others it was a *tabu*. Then, again, with others it was served only at sacrificial feasts, while still with others it was eaten for the purpose of acquiring the courage of the creature, just as the Malays of Singapore eat tigers' flesh, not for its taste, but to become imbued with the sagacity of the animal.

In China, pork is the principal meat, being held to be the purest of all animal foods. This undoubtedly was due to the care given to the animal, for it was kept clean and fed on grain instead of being allowed to subsist upon swill.



From a coloured woodcut by Shigemaru. Kintarō Hurling a Rock at a *Tengu*

The YÜAN HSIEN T'SA CHI, an ancient book, refers to the manner in which the animal was superciliously cared for. In this, it is related that Prince Shên, being exceptionally fond of pork and wishing it to be clean and pure, kept his pigs on a velvet carpet, gave them the same food he provided for his servants, and had them bathed twice a day.



From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. Ushiwaka in the *Tengu* Camp

In Charles Lamb's "A Dissertation Upon Roast Pig" the delicious flavour of this meat, discovered by the swineherd Hoti and his son Bobo, was likewise exceptionally enjoyed.

In northern Europe a boar's head was the choice dish at Christmas festivities. At Queen's College, Oxford, the dish is, upon these occasions, still brought in procession to the high table, accompanied by the singing of carols. This ceremony, as well as the use of the boar's head as the cognizance of Richard III of England, was probably the outgrowth of the estimation in which the animal was held as one of the four heraldic beasts of the venery.



From a woodcut by Tsukioka Masanobu. Nitta no Shiro Killing the Wild Boar

In Rome, under the emperors, most luxurious and costly dishes of hog's flesh were prepared, with ceremonies of a cruel and revolting character.

In Egypt, while the common people occasionally partook of the tempting dish of swine-flesh, it was especially forbidden to the priests, and a swineherd was never allowed to enter a temple.



In all Buddhist countries it was especially prohibited, since there no meat of any kind was ever eaten.



From a woodcut by Sukenobu. Teaching Ushiwaka Sojōbō, the *Tengu* King the Art of Fencing

The Arabians, Phoenicians, Ethiopians and other peoples of the East were ordered to abstain from eating swine-flesh, for in these warm countries pork was considered unwholesome because of the indiscriminate feeding of the animal and its susceptibility to many forms of disease. It was known to induce cutaneous troubles and was even held responsible for the much-dreaded leprosy. For these reasons it was forbidden to the Mohammedans as well as to the Jews, to whom the eating of it, the breeding of it, and the keeping of it among their flocks was denied. Even the trading in swine, by which money was easily acquired, was considered as great an iniquity as usury.



From a coloured woodcut by Shunsho. Kintaro Throwing a Wild Boar

According to Leviticus xi. 3, 7, 8, the only reason given for swine-flesh being a *tabu* is that it is an unclean animal, the clean animal being defined as one that has a cloven foot and chews the cud:

“3. Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is cloven-footed, and cheweth the cud among beasts, that shall ye eat.”

“7. And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be cloven-footed, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean to you.

“8. Of their flesh shall ye not eat, and their carcase shall ye not touch; they are unclean to you.” Again, in Isaiah lxxv. 3, 4:

“3. A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face; that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense upon altars of brick;

“4. Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, which eat swine’s flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels.”

The heathen nations of Palestine ate pork, and their tyrants and mobs frequently found much amusement in forcing Jewish captives to eat it.

It is thought, however, that originally the pig was sacred to all Semitic races, as it was to the Egyptians, inasmuch as by turning up the soil of the earth with its snout it first taught man the art of

ploughing.

In Mesopotamian countries it was regarded with the same primitive sentiment and worshipped as the divine mother, the Earth Sow, the symbol of creative energy. Festivals were held in many countries during the vernal equinox in which the boar took an important part. These ceremonies commemorated the destruction of the god, Tammuz, the personification of the Summer Sun, by a wild boar. This was significant of the death of all vegetation in the autumn and the renewal of life in the spring, a myth having its parallel not only in that in which Adonis—beloved of Aphrodite—in the flush of youth was slain by a wild boar, but also in the killing of Osiris by Typhon.

In Germanic mythology the boar is associated with the storm and, as a fertility animal, is also related to the harvest. Not only was the animal immolated in countries where it was worshipped, but there also existed many superstitions regarding its power to avert evil and invite blessings.



From a woodcut by Gakutei. Sojobō Riding a Wild Boar

The earliest representation of a boar was found among the Palaeolithic paintings on the walls of the Altamira caves of Spain. Then, as one of the signs of the zodiac in both India and China, its portrayal dates back to a remote past. It is likewise shown in very ancient Asiatic drawings, holding the earth upon its formidable tusks. In this form it was unquestionably a cosmic creature of the primitives, related to the Creation and afterwards appropriated by the Hindus when converting the pig-worshipping aborigines. It was first known as the *avatar* of Brahmā, the Creator and first person of the Hindu triad, who, as Prajapati in the form of a boar, rescued the earth from the waters of oblivion. The BHĀGAVATĀ PURĀNA states that this boar issued from the nostrils of the god, being at first very small, about the size of a thumb, then instantly increased to the size of an elephant. Again, in the SATAPATHA BRĀHMANA, the boar is referred to as *Emushi*, who raised the earth, then no larger than a hand-span. The TAITTIRIYA SANHITA also refers to it in the following:





From a woodcut by Hokusai. Marishi-ten

“The universe was formerly entirely fluid. Then Prajāpati practised arduous devotions, saying: ‘How shall this universe be created? ‘He beheld a lotus leaf standing.... Then assuming the form of a boar, he plunged beneath it and there found the earth, which he seized and raised to the surface.’”



From a Tibetan drawing. The House-Devil

Another version, giving a fuller account, states that Prajāpati, in the form of a boar, lifted the earth from the depths of the boundless waters whither it had been hurled by the demon Hiranyāksha, and where all its life was in danger of extinction. Later, however, the great achievement of the Creation was attributed to Vishnu, the Preserver and second person of the Hindu triad, who, it is claimed, infusing part of his divine essence into the form of a huge boar, dived into the abyss of the chaotic waters, and, after a struggle of a thousand years, slew the demon and rescued the earth.

At Soron, in northern India, the chief seat of the Vishnu cult, the faithful claim is the place where the demon Hiranyaksha was slain, hence it is called *Sakarahshetra*, the Place of the Good Deed and the Plain of the Boar.

In the RĀMĀYANA there are two accounts of this myth, both accrediting the creation to Brahma, but in one, this deity seems to embody the Vishnu attributes, as he is referred to as Brahmā, the self-existent, the imperishable Vishnu. It reads as follows:





From a Japanese shrine-image. Marishi-deva

“All was water only, through which the earth was formed. Thence arose Brahma, the self-existent, the imperishable Vishnu. He, then becoming a boar, raised up the earth and created the whole world.... The earth bowing in devout adoration addressed the boar as he approached, in a hymn of great beauty, in which she reminds him that she sprang from him, and is dependent upon him, as in fact are all things. Being thus thanked, the auspicious supporter of the world emitted a low, murmuring sound like the chanting of the SĀMA VEDA, and the mighty boar whose eyes were like the lotus, whose body was vast as the Nīla mountains, and of dark colour of the lotus leaves, uplifted upon his ample tusks the earth from its lowest regions. As he reared up his head, the waters that rushed from his brow purified the great sages, Sanandana, and the others residing spheres. Through the indentations made by his

hoofs the waters rushed into the lower worlds with a thundering noise. Before his breath the pious denizens of *Janaloka*, the abode of men, were scattered and the *muni* sought shelter amongst the bristles of his body. Trembling, he rose, supporting the earth dripping with moisture. Then the great sage, on the spheres of the blest were inspired with delight, and bowing lowly they gave praises to the stern-eyed upholder of the earth.”



From a Tibetan drawing. Marīcī or Vārāhī

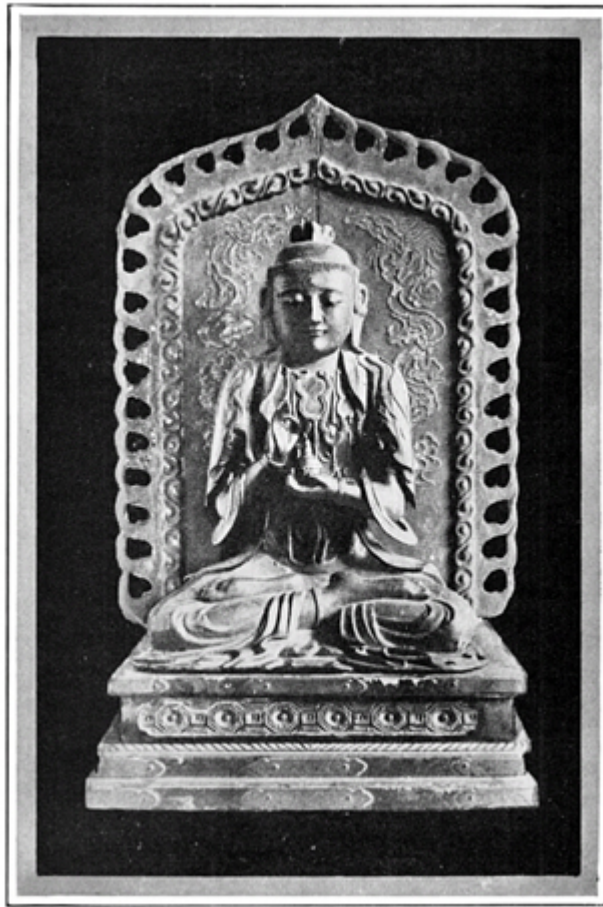
Tradition relates that “this huge boar was nine *yojana*, forty-five miles, in breadth; and a thousand *yojana*, five thousand miles, in height; his colour was like a dark cloud and his roar was like thunder. His bulk was vast as a mountain; his tusks were white, sharp, and fearful. Fire flashed from his eyes like lightning and he was radiant like the sun. His shoulders were round, flat and large; he strode along like a powerful lion. His haunches were fat, his loins slender, and his body smooth and beautiful.” It is this boar which is known as Vārāhī, the third incarnation of Vishnu. It was worshipped as a feminine deity also under the names of Vajravarāhī and Mārīcī. The latter was originally the queen of heaven, a metamorphosis of the sun, the source of all life, who became allied with the primeval, productive pig. She is known as the resplendent, the ray of light, and the goddess of the dawn, and invoked daily at sunrise. She also manifests herself in a terrible form, in which she is the consort of Yama, the god of death, or of Hayagriva, the horse-necked demon general, a sort of demoniacal centaur.





From a Japanese drawing. Marishi-ten

In Tibet she is referred to both as the Adamantine Sow, and the Diamond Sow, which became incarnate in the abbess of the convent of Yamdok lake. This belief originated in the tradition that an ancient abbess had behind one of her ears a growth which resembled a pig's head. A Mongol warrior by the name of Yun Gar attacked her cloister and tauntingly challenged her to come out and show her sow's head. After he succeeded in forcing his way into the building, to his amazement he found the place unoccupied except by a number of pigs, led by one much larger than the others. The invader was so startled and awe-struck that he refrained from pillaging the premises. Thereupon the pigs became transformed into monks and nuns, the large sow becoming the abbess herself. So impressed was Yun Gar with the miracle, that he became a Buddhist and enriched the monastery. This legend recalls the Greek myth in which the sorceress Circe, of the island of *Ææa*, after feasting the companions of Ulysses, with a magic potion transformed them into pigs, but later was forced to restore them to their human forms.



From a Japanese shrine-image. Marishi-deva

Mārīcī, also, is one of the characters of the RĀMĀYANA referred to in the preceding chapter. It was she whom Rāvana selected to entice Rāma into the wilds so that he might abduct Sītā. She did not, however, appear in her boar form, but transformed herself into a deer. Again, in the legend, *Hsi Yu Chi*, of the same chapter, the boar also plays an important part in the character of Chohakkai, the boar-headed, senseless creature that accompanied Sun Wu K'ung.

She is variously shown with either one or three heads, one of which is that of a pig, and hands ranging from two to ten in number, each of which holds some special symbol, while she uses as a mount either one or seven white pigs. In her terrible aspect, as one of the debased Tibetan gods, when representing the consort of Hayagriva, the "Protector of Horses," she wears a horse's head in her flying hair.

In Japan she is known as Marishi-deva, but in another form becomes a male deity known as Marishi-ten, the "Defender," who is said to reside on one of the stars of the Great Bear.

In the accompanying illustrations—one, a woodcut by Hokusai and the other a Japanese drawing—Marishi-ten is shown as a triple-headed deity, balancing himself with one foot on a cakra-shaped saddle, on a boar. In his arms he holds the bow and arrow, the sword, the war-fan, and the magic staff. In the reproductions of Japanese shrine-images, one represents the triple-headed Marishi-deva sitting in the Enchanting Attitude upon a lotus throne supported by seven boars, but the other has nothing to denote her as this deity, except the decoration on the back of her helmet—not visible in the illustration—of a group of three heads, one of which is that of a pig.

The boar, however, is best known as the trophy of the chase; for boar-hunting has been a favourite sport since the dawn of civilization. It is a more thrilling game, because it is more dangerous, than hunting the man-eater, for the latter is fought practically in safety from the backs of elephants, whereas the boar is attacked on foot with hounds as the only safeguard.



But there are other reasons than mere diversion for zest in this hunt, for this ferocious and destructive beast descending from its mountain haunts in search of swamps, where it may acquire a coat of mud as a protection against insects, scents the grain and the grapes of the habitation of man, and in droves, following a huge tusker, invades field and vineyard with such fury that in a single night nothing is left but a barren waste.

It must have been such an experience that led the Chinese poet Yüan Hao Wen, of the Chin dynasty, to write the following lines:

From dawn till night, from spring to winter, the farmer works growing his crops. But just as he is about to harvest his grain, droves of wild pigs as hungry as wolves and as ferocious as tigers sweep over his fields, leaving nothing but the barren, brown earth. The dogs and the cattle have fled; the wife and children crouch in terror, and the poor farmer—he thinks only of the coming tax-collector. With what will this human boar—who without mercy must fill his master's coffers—be paid? The unhappy man! He knows not which is the greater affliction, the wild boar or the tax-collector.



From a woodcut by Morikuni

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE FOX

*From dismal haunts of yawning graves,  
The fox steals forth to raid,  
With watchful eye and cautious tread,  
He creeps and crawls  
All wary of his mortal foe, the hound.  
Then, when the night is almost spent,  
In safe retreat  
He changes to a witching maid,  
And wanders forth, a youth to lure  
Unto his doom ;  
For, only upon human blood  
This fox may feed,  
If he immortal would become.*



From a painting by Kakunen

THE fox is indigenous to both China and Japan, being known by the name of *huli* in the former country and as *kitsune* in the latter. Its worship, according to ancient Chinese annals, existed as early as 3200 B.C. and has continued in both countries to the present day.

Tradition relates that this animal—like many others already described in these pages—is capable of attaining a longevity which always confers upon its possessor the power of transformation into not only animal but human forms. With the fox, however, this faculty exceeds that of any other creature, for it is recorded that at the age of fifty it can take the form of an ordinary woman, but at a hundred it may become either a wizard endowed with powers of magic, or a beautiful maiden who waylays young men, and with cunning wiles bewitches and leads them to their doom.

In the T'ang dynasty vixens were particularly rampant. They were believed to live principally in graves, from which they went forth to perform their diabolical deeds. One of this kind is described by Pa Chu-yü as follows: "In the deserted grave lives a fox. Though centuries old, she is young, for she transforms herself into a beautiful maiden with clouds of glossy hair and flowery cheeks; her long tail

becoming a flowing embroidered robe. When the sun sets and all is quiet, she goes slowly along the highways of the village, singing and dancing, sometimes sobbing and weeping. At times she pauses as if in deep thought, and blushing, for a minute hides her face, then suddenly smiles and becomes entrancing. It is therefore not surprising that nearly every man she meets is bewitched. Such is the power of beauty! Why does not poor humanity seek the reality instead of succumbing to its simulations?"

Legends innumerable are related of the activities of this creature. One pertains to an experience of a monk who, while passing through a graveyard, saw a fox place a skull and some worn bones upon its head and then cover its body with grass and leaves, whereupon it instantly, as if by magic, changed into a beautiful woman. Then, unconscious of being observed, she loitered by the woodside until a man on horseback chanced by. To him she told a sad story, asking for aid. He was just about ready to lift her on to his horse, when the monk, seeing his danger, at once appeared, and by means of the mystic sign made by his hands, and muttering a formula while brandishing his crozier, transformed the beautiful young lady into an old vixen. Disarmed and helpless, it fell to the ground and expired, leaving nothing in its place but the tools of its magic—the skull and dry bones, with the grass and the leaves.



From a wood-carving. Inari Daimyōjin



From a woodcut by Hokusai. Dakmi-ten

Another legend of a similar character pertains to two foxes which had attained the age of a thousand years and lived in the tomb of a king. They particularly preyed upon youthful students by discussing learned subjects. Finally, becoming very bold, they attempted to entice the Minister of State. He, however, at once became suspicious of them, believing them to be spectres. He said to himself, "If they be a hundred years old, they will be afraid of dogs, and if a thousand, they will transform into their real forms when the fire of an animated tree of the same age shines upon them." He determined to put them to the tests. They met the hounds unflinchingly, but when they were confronted with the fire of the old tree, they instantly resumed their vulpine shapes and lost no time in making their escape.

Again there is one of singular conceit, about a fox lying on an empty grave, unceasingly muttering, "*Ō'tzu, Ō'tzu*" After ten days it suddenly changed into a man who, upon his return to consciousness, told an unusual experience. He said that he had been married to what he later discovered was a fox-woman whose name was. *Ō'tzu*. They were very happy until a Taoist doctor chanced to come that way and pronounced her to be a mountain vixen. She at once disappeared, leaving him in the singular state in which he had been found.





From a stone image. Inari Temple Guardian

The relationship of a beautiful woman to a fox is another example of the use of a homophone in which the characters for both are pronounced *tzu*. Therefore, when a fox has assumed the form of a beautiful woman or a fox-fairy, she is called *tzu*, and if, perchance, she is asked to give her name, she will respond, “It is *Ō’tzu*.”

That the fox was believed to live in other places besides old graves is shown in the following account written by Su Shun-ch’in: “All foxes have homes within the city wall. For generations they raise their families, yet the place where they live is unknown. They eat the harvested grain in the autumn and drink the water for irrigating the garden. At night they prowl about looking for food. Sometimes they climb to the tops of the great towers, where they practise all kinds of magic, beguiling hundreds and hundreds of men. Then, to quell this evil, a hunt is planned. Dogs and falcons are sent to find their dens and, in their fright, they not only lose their power of magic, but its effects, and become hideous. The dogs and falcons overtake them, loot their dens, destroy their young, and kill them in great numbers. Their dead bodies cover the ground and yield a rich supply of fur, which is regarded as a compensation for all the evil they have inflicted upon the people. Herein lies the great lesson that, while the exercise of power may be most gratifying, it cannot continue for ever. At last comes the single failure which undoes a hundred successes.”





From a woodcut by Hokusai. Ojisan Inari



From a temple painting. Izuna *Oongen*

It is, however, only after the fox has passed its thousandth year that it attains to the full dignity and potentiality of the *Chiu Wei-hu*, "Celestial Fox." Concerning this highly evolved creature there are different versions. Some authorities claim that the knowledge and power accumulated through so prolonged a life have merely augmented its demoniacal qualities, while others claim that the Celestial Fox is a benign creature which appears only during the reign of a benevolent and peace-loving emperor.

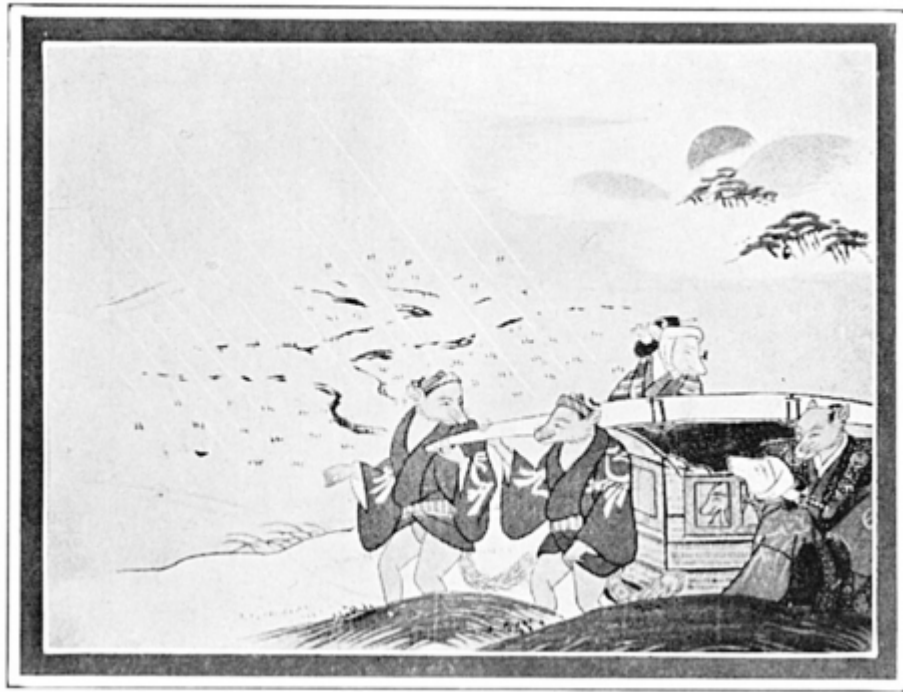
The SHAN-KAI CHING relates that at the time of Wên of the Chou dynasty, twelfth century B.C., a Celestial Fox appeared bearing a book of knowledge in its mouth. This event was regarded as a good omen, for, immediately following, all the Eastern barbarians submitted without opposition to the Central Powers. This legend is doubtless responsible for the custom of placing a book or a roll of manuscript in the mouth of one of the guardians of fox-temples, to symbolize the supreme knowledge of the animal.

Of the Celestial Fox, Keio Pu of the Ch'ing dynasty, seventeenth century, wrote:



From a stone image. Inari Temple Guardian

The divine creature came from Ching Chiu—Green Mountains—her nine tails are the symbol of her wonderful power. She came when the empire was prosperous, bringing, as a greeting, a book which she carried in her mouth. But after the overthrow of the Chou dynasty, and the corruption of the empire, she degenerated into a witch and brought no end of trouble for the people.



From a coloured woodcut by Minkō. Carrying the Bride

This Celestial Fox presides over all the fox-tribe, which serve her in every capacity, but principally in supplying her with her chief diet, human blood.



From a coloured woodcut by Toyokuni. The Dream

In some sections of northern China she is worshipped on the first day of each month, each house being provided with a separate room, or an altar in the back-yard, upon which offerings of chicken wings and other foods are placed for her use. Entrance to these places is very small, for it is believed that the fox can supernaturally enter a place through any aperture. Statues of this celestial creature sometimes adorn these places of worship. In them she is shown as a maiden in queenly garb, from under which issue nine long bushy tails.

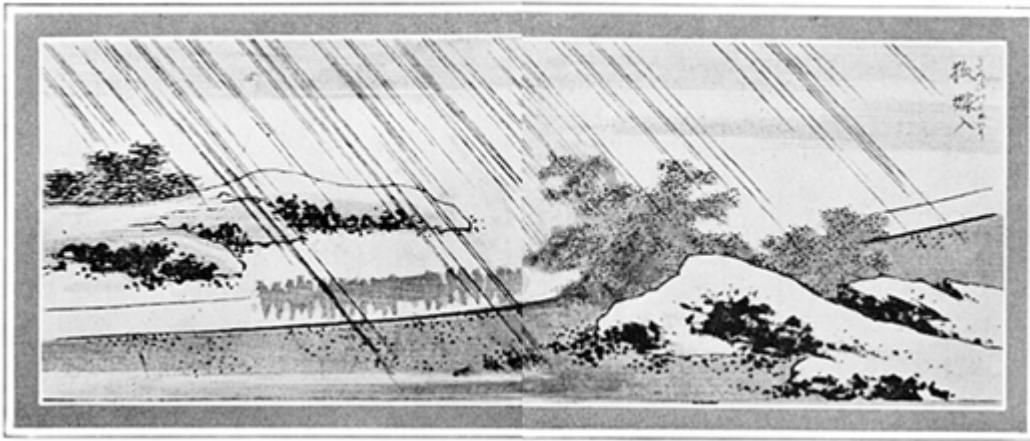




From a painting by Shoūn. Lighting the Way for the Procession.

The oldest record of a Nine-tailed Fox describes one which appeared as the favourite concubine of Chou Hsin—Shang dynasty, twelfth century B.C.—and was known by the name of T'a Ki. Her influence over the ruler was so great that she led him to commit outrages which ultimately caused his downfall. She was finally detected by a Taoist priest by means of a magic mirror which reflected her true form, but she succeeded in making her escape. She had previously operated in the same capacity in India, where she caused the death of a monarch. Again, in the eighth century B.C., King Yao Wang, of the western Chou dynasty, had a similar experience with a fox-woman, known by the name of Pao Tzū. But it was the baneful T'a Ki, who migrated to Japan in the twelfth century A.D., and again in the rôle of a favourite concubine, known by the name of Tamamo no Mayé, bewitched the Emperor Toba Tennō, causing him to sicken nigh unto death. But here she met her Nemesis in the astrologer Abe no Seimei—also known as Kamo Yasunari—who, summoned to the court to diagnose the case of the monarch, recognized in her none other than the famous *Kinno Kiubi no Kitsune*, “The Golden Nine-tailed Fox.” Being himself the offspring of a fox-mother, he knew the characteristics of the vulpine tribe, and his suspicions were verified when, in a dark room, he saw the usual fox-halo issue from her head. Then, to trap her, he had an altar built in the palace gardens, presumably for the purpose of having prayers said for the speedy recovery of his lord.





From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Fox's Wedding Procession

The concubine failed to attend the ceremony, and, when sent for, came most reluctantly. As she approached, the Abe, following the example of the Taoist priest of centuries before, flashed upon her the *kagami*, the Buddhist mirror of accusation which ever reveals the truth; and therein was reflected not only her foxvisage, but her nine tails, while the light from the mirror illuminated the entire premises, revealing her company of fox attendants that ever accompanied and served her in her fiendish activities.



From a coloured woodcut by Suiyō. Going to the Temple

One version of this myth claims that Abe discovered the fox by feeling the pulse of the beauty, which proved to be vulpine and not human. However, as soon as the enchantress realized that she was unmasked, she fled from the scene, going toward the moor of Nasu, whither she was pursued by the archer, Miura Kuranosuke. But just as he was about to fell her, she transformed herself into a stone, which became known as *Sesshō Seki*, "Death Stone," on account of its death-dealing characteristics—for it was sure to be fatal to anyone who should happen to touch it or even look upon it.

In this form the vixen abode, a terror to humanity, until the fifteenth century, when a virtuous priest by the name of Gennō Oshō determined to destroy this thing which menaced the people. So, by the power of Buddha, he assailed it with his sacred *hossu*, “fly brush,” carried by mendicant bonzes, and the stone burst asunder with a great explosion, scattering its fragments to the four winds. But so powerful had been the malefic influences of this fox, that poisonous exhalations destructive to every form of life still issue from the ground on which the stone stood.

This legend has been immortalized in a number of different dramas of the dance; one in particular of the *No* opera is known as *Toba no In*, and another as *Sesshō Seki*.

In the accompanying illustration of a Hokusai design, the foxfairy is gracefully portrayed, while in the Kunisada woodcut, entitled “The Exposé of Tamano no Mayé,” she is also effectually given. She, occupying the centre of the scene, is shown in the act of resisting the wand of sacred *gohei*, “cut papers representing the gods,” which Abe has hurled at her, while on her left sits the archer, Miura Kuranosuke, ready to pursue her when she flees.

A fox-woman will not only shun a mirror, for fear of being detected, but she will also avoid her reflection on water, which likewise will reveal her true form. An example of this is given in the woodcut by Toyokuni, entitled, “A Fox!” which portrays a graceful creature looking upon her vulpine features in the pool below her.

The fox has figured extensively in the folk-lore of both China and Japan, but is not to be found in India. From the similarity of the myths, it is quite evident that although Japan claims a native fox-cult, she inherited most of her lore of this subject from the Hermit Kingdom.



From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige. Fox-lights on New Year's Eve

Among the different kinds, there is one in Japan of most singular character, for it seems to be a spirit fox rather than a reality, since its presence is only felt, never seen. It is known as the *kudagetsune*, “pipe-fox,” for it operates exclusively from its owner’s bamboo pipe, whither it is summoned by means of magical formulas. It is regarded as an oracle, for it has the power to see into the past and future, and to answer all kinds of troublesome questions.



From a coloured woodcut by Toyokuni. A Fox!

The significance of the fox varies considerably. Beginning with benevolent qualities it ultimately becomes very malefic. Again, when black, it is thought to be the harbinger of good luck, but when white, the precursor of calamity and consequent distress; and a group of three foxes is still more foreboding.



From a coloured woodcut by Kunisada. The Exposé of Tamamo no Mayé

It is also claimed that as the fox ages, its knowledge increases and its sphere of potency enlarges so that it can not only see the past but the future, and can even foretell the time of its own death. But, if it is sufficiently advanced, it can prolong its life and become immortal by first offering invocations to the “life-controlling star” of the constellation of the Great Bear, and then affixing to its head a skull procured from an old grave. Thus equipped, it has the key to the mysteries of nature. This doubtless accounts for the key which artists sometimes place in the creature’s mouth, or use as a decorative motive in some other capacity, as on the pedestal of one of the stone images entitled “Inari Temple Guardians” of the given illustrations. This key is known to the Japanese as the *kagi*, which unlocks the *takara no kura*, “treasure chest,” so intimately related to the Seven Gods of Happiness.

But whatever the colour or condition of the fox, it is ever thought to possess supernatural powers which it may exercise for good or evil. Still, notwithstanding this power, there are things by which it may become disarmed. It is terribly afraid of dogs—even fleeing from a puppy—and is said to become dispossessed by the sound of a hunter’s bow. It also succumbs when accosted with ancient objects, for these are said to have accumulated the essential elements of *Yang*, the positive principle, which ever overcomes the power of *Yin*, the negative principle, utilized by the fox. But the most potent antidote for its malefic operations are the incantations, charms, and magic potions of the Taoist and Buddhist priests who not only are able to counteract its pernicious influences, but likewise make use of them to destroy other evil influences.

Among the remedies for diseases, prescribed at the temples, is one made from a small spherical substance found in the heart of the animal. This mythical member, which is the soul of the creature and source of its magic power, is represented as a luminous flaming jewel, similar to the pearl of the dragon, and the familiar *tama* of Japan. It is variously located in the animal; some authorities placing it on its head, as on the fox of “*Izuna Gongen*” of an accompanying illustration. Others place it in the creature’s mouth as in one of the stone images of the “Inari Temple Guardians” of the given illustrations, and still others in the end of its tail. To the latter is attributed the phosphorescent lights, the will-o’-the-wisp, called by the Japanese *kitsune-ki*, “fox-fire,” which so mysteriously float over the nocturnal landscapes. Whenever this interesting phenomenon occurs, the Japanese peasant says: “The foxes are having a festival”—a subject quite popular with painters, and shown in the accompanying woodcut by Hiroshige.



From a composition by Hokusai. The Celestial Nine-tailed Fox

The luminous appendage of the fox is often thought to be a real firebrand, which is the outcome of the fiery nature of the creature which, when angry, it is believed to use to cause a conflagration. Hence it is not infrequent to attribute a fire to some offence offered to a fox, as in the case of a Chinese mandarin who lost all his possessions in a fire which had been started by a fox he had killed.

The association of light and fire with the fox appears among quite a number of nations. In Finnish mythology, the *aurora borealis* is known as the Light of the Fox; and in the Cerealia at Rome, foxes were set on fire and hunted about the circus, but originally were driven over the fields.

So strong is the belief in fox illusions, that any unusual occurrence is, by the simple-minded, attributed to some form of foxmagic. An interesting example of such was given in a Tōkyō paper in 1889, in which it was related that an engineer on the Tōkyō and Yokohama railroad saw a train on his track which had the appearance of coming toward him, but when the collision occurred, to his amazement, all that he saw was the body of a crushed fox. Another example of the belief in fox-illusion is related of a farmer who witnessed an eruption of a volcano with all its attendant horrors, and, when questioned regarding his feelings when viewing it, said: "It did not trouble me, for I knew it was only the attempts of a mischievous fox to frighten me."

There are many instances in which individuals have been killed because they were believed to be transformed foxes in quest of victims. This fox-possession known as *kitsune tsukai* manifests itself in a nervous disorder, in which the person affected acts and talks like a fox. He generally is thought to harbour the spirit of a fox, and thus to be a double entity with two different voices which engage in violent disputes. The priests of the Nichiren sect are considered the most successful expellers of foxes. During the exorcism, the victim lies unconscious for days, after which, during screaming fits, the demon makes his exit.



Fox-sorcery is said to be practised by many families in Japan, who own these animals and use them not only to menace their enemies, but to watch over and to protect their own property. Such families are avoided like the plague, and other families will never marry into them.

Among the innumerable legends pertaining to the fox, the *Kitsune no Yome-iri*, “The Fox’s Wedding,” is the most popular. This is said to occur whenever the sun shines through a gentle shower. Then, when the occidentalist says, “The devil is whipping his wife,” the Japanese say, “The fox-bride is going to her husband,” thus comparing the variableness of the weather to the caprice of the fox.



From a coloured woodcut by Yeizan. Not Foxes

The Fox’s Wedding—like the Mouse’s Wedding, shown in an accompanying illustration, entitled, “The Dream,” by Toyokuni—is, after all, one of the many instances in which the prolific imagination of the Japanese people led them to confer upon animals human customs. Japanese weddings always take place in the evening, because night represents the negative principle of *In*, while the participants represent the positive principle of *yō*—the condition of *In-yō* being a necessity for a happy marriage. The fox, however, representing the *In*, must marry during the day, but since he mainly haunts dark places, particularly avoiding the sun, the great *yō* symbol, he selects for his wedding a time when it is partially obscured by a rain.

In the beautiful design by Hokusai, the wedding procession is dimly shown in the middle distance; in the painting by Shoūn, a nearer view is depicted; while in the woodcut by Minkō a closer view of the bride in the *norimono*, “sedan chair,” may be seen; and in the print by Suiyō, the first-born is being taken to the temple.

The fox is honoured as the messenger of Inari Daimyōjin, the presiding genius of the temples of Mount Inari—noted for its unusual growth of rice—located near Fushimi, in the vicinity of Kyōto. Concerning this deity there is much confusion. Some authorities claim that Uga no Mitama, the Shintō goddess of crops, including rice, has this distinction, for the word *Inari* means rice-bearing; *ina*, “rice,” and *ri*, a homophone of *ne*, “package.” Others maintain that Inari Daimyōjin is none other than Inari Sama, also called Ojisan, a being who, appearing to Kōbō Daishi on the hills back of Inari-yama, was adopted by the great founder of the Shingon sect as the protector of the temple. But the INARI CHINZA YURAI states that this old man—which Hokusai, in the accompanying woodcut, has represented as “an ancient of days “carrying rice sheaves—was only a mere mortal by the name of Ryūzuda, who lived at the foot of the mountain, and spent his days cultivating the ricefields and his evenings chopping wood.

This work further suggests that the old man may have been the spirit of the mountain, but he never could have been a manifestation of the Goddess of the Harvest, the Divine Mother, or Earth, which yields fruits to nourish and sustain mankind.

The association of the fox with the rice-goddess is said to be due to a misunderstanding of names, the significance of which is derived from another homophone. Uga no Mitama had a second name, Miketsu no Kami. The two first characters of this name, *Mike* and *tsu*, when transposed into *mi* and *ketsu*, suggest two other characters, *me* *ketsu*, meaning “three foxes.” Upon such slender threads hang the symbols of mankind. The fox thus came to be identified with the goddess, but only as a messenger and attendant of the temple, hence two foxes, such as are shown in given illustrations, guard all Inari shrines. Notwithstanding this explanation, Inari or Inari Daimyōjin is generally referred to as a foxdeity, although she never is represented as a fox, but always as a queenly maiden riding a fox. In the given illustrations of a wood-carving, however, she is shown standing on a fox which, in sitting position, rests in a bank of clouds.

Another deity associated with the fox is Izuna *Gongen* herewith shown. *Gongen* means “a temporary manifestation of Buddha” and the name Izuna, as in the case of Inari, is derived from the mountain upon which his principal temple is located.

The original Shintō deity of Mount Izuna—situated in the Shinano province—in the vicinity of Nagano—was a fox known as Miketsu no Kami.

With the introduction of the Shingon sect by the priest Kukai—better known by his posthumous name, Kōbō Daishi, before referred to in connection with Inari Sama—the Hindu and Tibetan Dakīnī was installed to share with Inari, not only the fox as a messenger, but also its attributes, the *tama* and the *kagi*. Dakīnī was one of the numerous gods of the Yogā-caryā school which the priests annexed. She belongs to a special class of divinities designated as “air walkers,” which in the Buddhist Pantheon rank next to the *Boddhisattva*, and who confer upon their devotees the power of witchcraft and sorcery. She is usually believed to have been identical with the fox, being referred to in the old scripts as *amatsu kitsune*, “heavenly fox,” because there prevailed at that time an idea that there existed a species of fox which could fly through the air, doubtless a relict of the “air-walking” attributed to Dakīnī.

The ancient fox-cult, before referred to, was singularly interwoven with the worship of the *tengus*, mythical beings having a bird’s beak and wings, which were said to reside in the forests of Mount Izuna. These *tengus* were also referred to as celestial dogs and celestial foxes. For these reasons it is quite consistent that Dakīnī-ten should manifest herself in some shrines as a *tengu*, for the doctrines of the Dakīnī-ten and of Izuna *Gongen* are the same.

The local legend, which accounts for the origin of this *tengu* deity, relates that he appeared to the *Yamabushi* Sanjakubō at the temple in the province of Echigo, while practising *Fudōzammai*. The priest had been in meditation continually for a week, when, one day at dawn, he saw rising from the

incense a flame, out of which issued a deity bearing a close resemblance to Fudō, the god of wisdom. Like the latter, he stood in the flame and held in one hand the “sword of wisdom” and in the other the “cord of rescue,” but he had the form of a *tengu* and stood on a white fox, which bore upon its head the mystical *tama* to represent its supernatural power.

While beholding the vision, Sanjakubō became conscious, not only that he was gazing upon a reflection of his own being but that he had been given the miraculous power of flying. So summoning a white fox, he flew to the Akiha mountain in Tōtōmi province, where—in a temple dedicated to Kwannon—he took up his abode and established a new cult. This spread in various directions until it reached Mount Izuna, where it so prospered that it took the name of the mountain.

The vision of Sanjakubō is very definitely represented in the reproduction of a temple painting entitled “Izuna Gongen.” In this the deity is shown as a *tengu* holding the sword and lasso, riding a white fox with serpent coiled around his ankles, and carrying a *tama* on his head. Dakīnī-ten, however, as shown in the woodcut by Hokusai, appears as a beautiful young woman holding the *kagi* and the *tama*, flying through the air on a white fox, propelled by the mystic *fukan*.

Of the legends associated with animals thus far given in this series of monographs, those of the fox are of particular interest. Supernatural powers have ever been a coveted possession of mankind. The quest for the elixir of life and the jewel of omnipotence has been pursued through the ages. It is therefore not singular that legends of animals credited with such endowment should be alluring; for legends—which include fairy lights on miry moors, fox processions through sunlit mists, and a nine-tailed celestial fox unmasked by a magic-mirror—are apt to invite an enchantment almost comparable to that of *kitsune tsukai*.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE BADGER AND THE BEAR

*An old monastery, where nobody lives,  
Where even the bells give never a sound,  
The tanuhi alone beats the temple drum.*

JAKUREN.



From a painting by Kakunen

ANOTHER animal of the Far East possessing the magical power of transformation and playing a part similar to that of the fox is the badger. In China, its literary appellation is *li*, but it is more commonly known as *yeh mao*, “wild cat.” It is regarded as a cross between a fox and a cat, since in its nocturnal and solitary habits it resembles both.

In Japan it is most commonly known as *tanuhi*, “raccoon-faced dog,” although prior to the thirteenth century it was called *mujina*.

Bakin, the novelist, who collaborated with Hokusai, claims that the name *tanuki* originally came from *ta no ke*, “rice-field-spook,” or *ta neko*, “ricefield-cat”; while, again, he says that the badger is called “field cat” and the domestic cat is referred to as the house *tanuhi*.

Like its vulpine brother, the badger is endowed with supernatural qualities, but lacking the divine spirit of the fox, naturally, is not so adroit. It is regarded more as a practical joker which, under different disguises, amuses itself at the expense of its human associates.

While the fox is held to be cunning, deceitful, and malicious, the badger is merely mischievous and playful, although in localities where there are no foxes, it is regarded as the culprit of most offences.

This, doubtless, accounts for the name *furu tanuki*, “old badger,” irreverently bestowed upon the *Shōgun* Ieyasu, who, by some, was regarded as a clever schemer.

In the days of the Empire, when the *daimyō* held great estates in the country districts, badgers were quite numerous and a great nuisance. They not only constantly stole the food offerings set at the fox shrines, but they boldly came up on to the *engawa*, “house veranda,” and not only disarranged the order of the *zōri*, “straw sandals,” left there, but frequently ran away with them. Such losses were always accounted for by the little footprints left there as evidences of their visit.

The principal prank of the badger was, on a moonlight night, in hidden places, to sit on its haunches, inflate its abdomen to the size of a drum and beat it with its paws, producing entrancing sounds which beguiled unsuspecting mortals, causing them to wander hither and thither in search of them. This performance—known as *tanuki no hara tsuzumi*, “the music of the badger’s drum,” as shown in the accompanying illustrations entitled “The Nocturne” and “The Badger’s Serenade”—together with other feats of magic was, however, only possible after the animal had reached a longevity of a thousand years.

An interesting legend relating to this accomplishment is told of an old *tanuki* who was saved by a child from being killed by a dog. The night after the occurrence, the child’s father dreamed that a badger visited his home and requested the privilege of living under the veranda during the winter. This request the man not only granted, but daily supplied the animal with food. Then the man had a second dream, in which the badger expressed its gratitude and promised to entertain the household. Thereupon, nightly he made beautiful music by playing upon his belly-drum. Then a third dream followed, in which the badger informed the man that it was about to die, for it would be bitten to death by a dog, concluding with, “In my former existence I was a hunter and Kenkuro was a badger whom I killed. Therefore, in this existence I must pay the penalty, and Kenkuro, reborn as a dog, will kill me. We animals have this advantage over men, that we know about previous and future existences.” The next day the badger was found dead and its body was reverently buried near the house.





From a coloured woodcut by Shigenobu. Seeking a Victim

But not so credulous was the author SHONAI KASEI DAN, who states that in the An-ei era (1772-1780), badger music was heard on clear autumn nights, at the time when the moon shone brightly. It lasted from three to five in the morning, continually sounding “ton, ton,” sometimes quite near, then again far away. But after some investigation, these sounds were traced to a bellows operated by a smithy, their difference not only being due to the direction of the wind, but finally disappearing in the sounds of the city noises.



From a coloured woodcut by Hokusai. The Nocturne

It is also stated that 'the badger, at times, assumes the very shape of the moon, but this is only possible on full-moon nights.

It was, however, in its various transformations that the creature was said to find its chief amusement. In the guise of a mendicant priest called *tanuki bōzu*, this little rascal was said to wander forth at night, and in lonely places intercept and mislead the unwary pedestrian, and then chuckle at its victim's predicament. Again, masquerading as a righteous and merciful bonze, it would visit fishermen, and after prevailing upon them to empty their nets, it would suddenly disappear and from some concealed position gleefully watch the perplexed and disturbed men.



From a bronze lantern-holder

There are many legends pertaining to suspected monks who, after having been killed by men or dogs, were discovered to have been badgers. A typical one is that in which Saitō Sukeyasu, a captain of the guards, while hunting in the province of Tamba, was compelled to take refuge during a snowstorm in a haunted monastery. During the night he saw approaching what appeared to be a giant Buddhist priest. Then suddenly, a long, thin, hairy arm reached in through an opening and stroked his forehead. Instantly the warrior was upon the spectre and, in the struggle which ensued, Sukeyasu succeeded in crushing the creature to death by pinning it to the floor with one of the *shōji*, “sliding doors.” During the encounter, the warrior was amazed not only to see the spectre grow smaller and smaller, but to hear its voice grow weaker and weaker until it expired. And when the servants brought a light all that could be seen under the *shōji* was an old *tanuhi*.



From a porcelain incense-burner

In the accompanying illustration by Hiroshige, entitled “The Trap,” the *tanuki bōzu* has been surprised by a bait set for his kind. The savoury smell of dried fish had entirely disarmed him, and as he contemplated the tempting delicacy, he found himself instantly reverted to his original shape.

Priests and nuns who, in any way, aroused suspicion were always accused of being badgers. One instance is related in the *TAIHEI-KI*, in which Kakuban, a priest of Kōya-san, was found by his companions seated in the attitude and having the appearance of Fudō Myō-ō, the flaming deity of wisdom and justice. It was decided that either he was a fox or a badger, or that he knew the magical arts of these animals and had thus transformed himself.



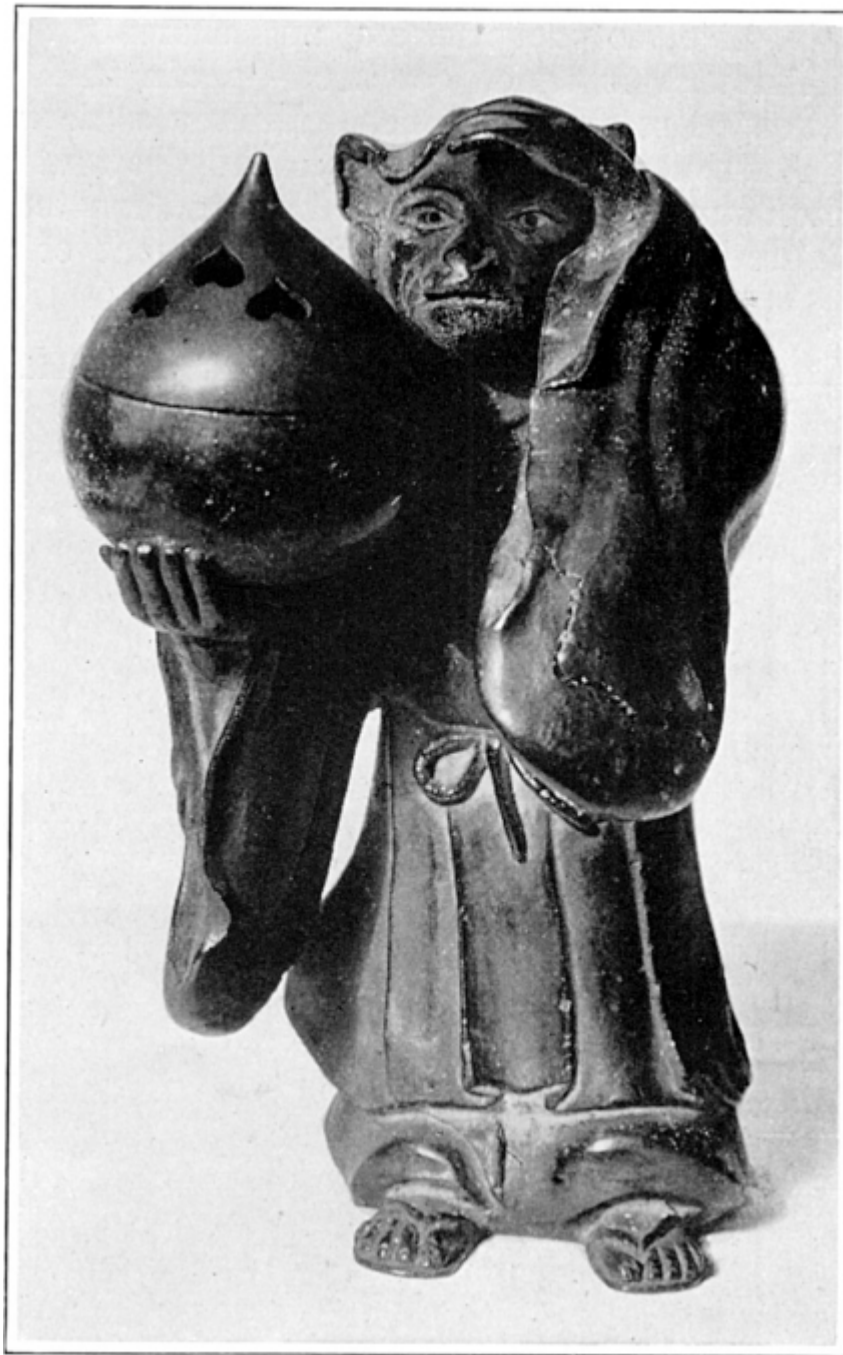
From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige. The Trap

Again, an aged nun riding in a *kago*, “sedan-chair,” was similarly accused and finally exposed by forcing smoke into her nostrils.

The likenesses of the *Buddha* and the *Bodhisattva* were also feigned by these mischievous creatures, and all sorts of miraculous performances were attributed to their magic. One of the former is told in the *UJI SHŪI MONOGATARI* of the thirteenth century, in which a hunter was told by a hermit—whom the hunter daily supplied with food—that *Fugen Bosatsu*, the deity of compassion, nightly appeared to him in response to his prayers. The hunter’s curiosity excited, he remained to see the vision and, sure enough, at midnight the *Bodhisattva*, seated on his white elephant, appeared. The devout man wept and worshipped, but the hunter, to test it, shot an arrow into the apparition. Instantly it vanished, but below the place where it had been lay a dead *tanuki*.

Another legend is told about a wooden image of Nichiren, in the monastery of Kōhōji in Shimosa province, which recited *sūtras*, “holy scriptures,” every night. This unusual occurrence attracted people from all parts of the country until the abbot became distrustful and determined to put the miracle to a test. He therefore questioned the statue regarding the mysteries of the doctrine, and receiving no reply, he seized an axe and pulled it from its base. Thereupon an old *tanuki* jumped from behind it and fled; but it was soon overtaken and beaten to death.





From a bronze incense-burner

The power of transformation of this creature was even extended to inanimate objects, as exemplified in the legend of *Bumuku Chagama*, "The Lucky Teakettle," the delight of all Japanese children. This relates that a priest of the temple of Moriniji in the town of Tatebayashi, near Tōkyō, while watching his tea-kettle brewing over the charcoal embers, was amazed to see it, by degrees, change into a badger. First, four legs appeared, then the spout took the form of a head and neck, then a bushy tail sprang forth, and finally, the whole kettle bristled with hair. Thus animated, it ran around the temple, whither it was pursued by its frantic owner, and finally captured. Thereupon it was securely fastened in a box so that it might resume its true shape. But fearing to possess so weird and uncanny an object, the priest sold it to a tinker for a small sum, happy to be rid of it. The tinker, not realizing what he had purchased, was startled one night to see his new possession cavorting around

the room; and relating the experience to a friend, he was advised to carry it around the country and exhibit it. This he did, and so profitable was the enterprise that he amassed a fortune. Then, when he decided to retire from business, he carried it back to the temple as an offering, where it still remains as one of the treasures.



From a sword-guard. The Badger Tea-kettle

Legends of *tanuki*-haunted houses, as well as holy edifices, are innumerable. One is related in connection with the palace of a princess in Kyōto in the twelfth century in which the warrior Shoda Yorinori determined to run down the ghost. He lay in vain waiting for seven nights, but on the eighth he was rewarded by a bombardment of potsherds from some invisible source. Then a black thing jumped toward him; in turn he sprang at it and succeeded in seizing it, but all he had to reward his efforts was an old hairless *tanuki*. He carried the animal, still alive, to the princess, and thereafter there were no ghosts in the palace.



From a painting by Kyōsai The Fleeing Tea-kettle

Another instance occurred—again in Kyōto—where the household of a minister was seriously disturbed by repeated rains of pebbles. Finally a *samurai*, “one of the military class,” devised a remedy for this annoyance. He arranged a feast for all badgers and invited them to come from every locality; and since he came from the country, they all knew him and trusted him. Then, with rice mats spread and lamps lighted, he served them with the meat of their own kind roasted and stewed in various ways. When the *saké*, “sweet wine,” cups had been emptied and all were in a lively mood, he cried out in a loud voice: “You *tanuki*, you mean fellows, why do you haunt this house? All those who commit such acts will hereafter be punished in this way.” Thereupon, taking up the *tanuki* bones left from the feast, he threw them upon the wall of an adjoining monastery, saying: “These will never play any more tricks,” and never again did pebbles rain on the roof of that house.



From a wood-carving. The Badger Priest

The *mujina* form of the badger was credited with possessing a mysterious pearl resembling the *tama* of the fox. This is first referred to in the *NIHONJI* as follows: "In olden times there was in the Kuwada village, Tamba province, a man whose name was Mikaso, who had in his house a dog named Ayuki. This dog killed a mountain animal called a *mujina*. In the belly of the beast was found a *magatama*, the Yasoka gem. This was presented to the Emperor and is now in the shrine of Ise no kami." To this *magatama*, an ancient curved bead often found in the dolmens, may be attributed the mysterious power of the badger by which he not only transforms himself into various shapes, but by which he produces different illusions, such as *ignes fatui*, "the will-o'-thewisp" lights of marshy places, and also *fata morgana*, "mirages," of fairy palace, air castles, processions of *daimyō*, even of horsemen in battle array—all for the amusement of the unsophisticated.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Startled Bonze

This unusual creature is also said to possess considerable skill in the use of the brush, one example of which was regarded as a *takusen*, “divine communication,” by the priests of Inari. It consisted of a combination of seal characters in the square style and in the running hand, but had many mistakes in language. It had been written by a visiting priest who, because he never was known to have spoken, was called “the silent ascetic.” But one day he was attacked by a dog and killed, and all that remained of him was the dead body of a *tanuki*.





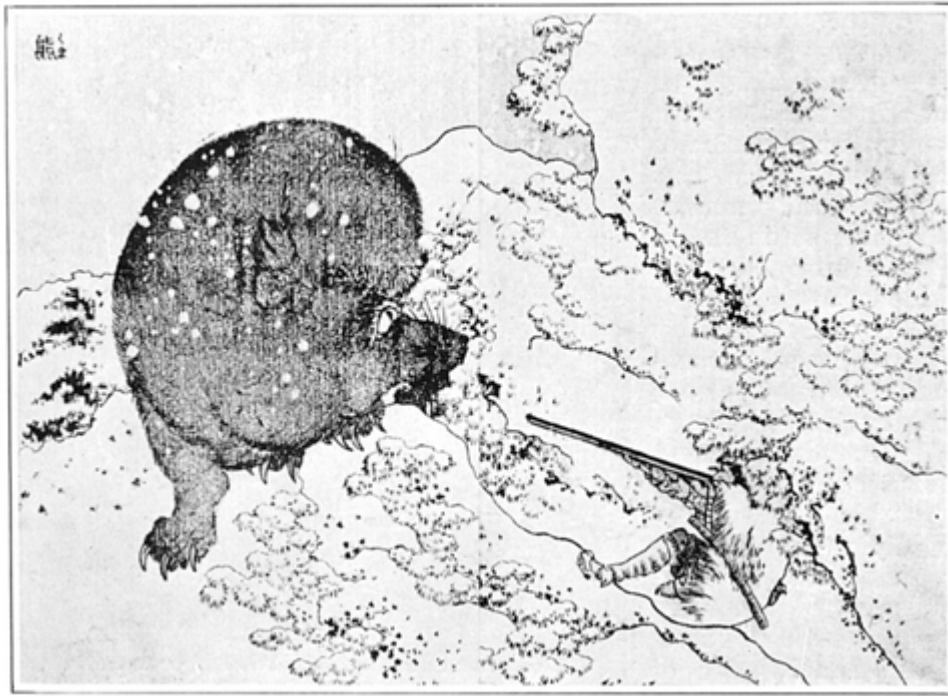
From a sword-guard. The Badger Serenade

Another legend states that a *tanuki* that lived above the ceiling of a house in the Shimōsa province had the reputation of being a skilful writer. A visitor at the house requested to see an example of his work, whereupon this master, taking paper and pencil, struck fire upon it from a flint and placed it in the room. In a short time, the paper and pencil, as if animated, rose to the ceiling, and thereupon the *tanuki* wrote the characters: "*Tanuki* one hundred and eight years old." The following year this was repeated, but the characters read: "*Tanuki* one hundred and nine years old," which was regarded as a proof that the manifestation was genuine.



From a porcelain incense-burner. The Badger Tea-kettle

One of the most widely known *tanuki* stories is *Kachi-kachi-yama*, “The Crackling Mountain” or “The Revenge of the Hare.” This describes an episode in which a badger was captured by a woodcutter who directed his wife to cook it for the evening meal. The cunning creature, however, persuaded the old woman to free it, promising to help her in her duties, but no sooner was it at large than it killed her, and assuming her form, reversed the order, and served her for supper. When the woodcutter had eaten heartily, the *tanuki*, resuming its natural shape, taunted the old man with his deed and fled. A hare, friendly to the woodcutter, seeing his plight, planned to avenge him. So the legend continues with the badger carrying up the mountain—in exchange for a tempting bait of grilled beans—a burden of hay which the hare slyly set on fire. Then when the badger asked the cause of the crackling sounds, the hare reassured him with the reply that they were a feature of the mountain which was known as *Kachi-kachi-yama*, “Crackling Mountain.” Soon, however, the badger’s back began to blister, and to be rid of the flaming burden he rolled himself down the mountain. The hare, then disguised as a plaster-vendor, supplied him with a mixture of red pepper and greens, which, while causing him much pain, still did not cause his death. Later, the hare met the badger and invited him to journey with him to the moon. The badger, however, suspicious of the hare, who before had tricked him, decided to sail in his own boat and built one of clay; but they had not gone far before the badger’s boat became sodden and began to sink. Then the hare, seeing his advantage, took his paddle and held his enemy under the water until he was drowned.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Hunter and the Bear

The badger in China apparently was never considered of sufficient importance for representation in art, but in Japan it was particularly popular among craftsmen of the Ukiyo-ye school. The MANGWA, "Illustrated Books of Rough Sketches," by Hokusai, Kyōsai, and others, include drawings such as are herewith shown.

The other animal included in this chapter, the bear, known to the Chinese as *hsung* and to the Japanese as *kuma*, does not seem to have held much of a place in the æsthetic estimation of either country.

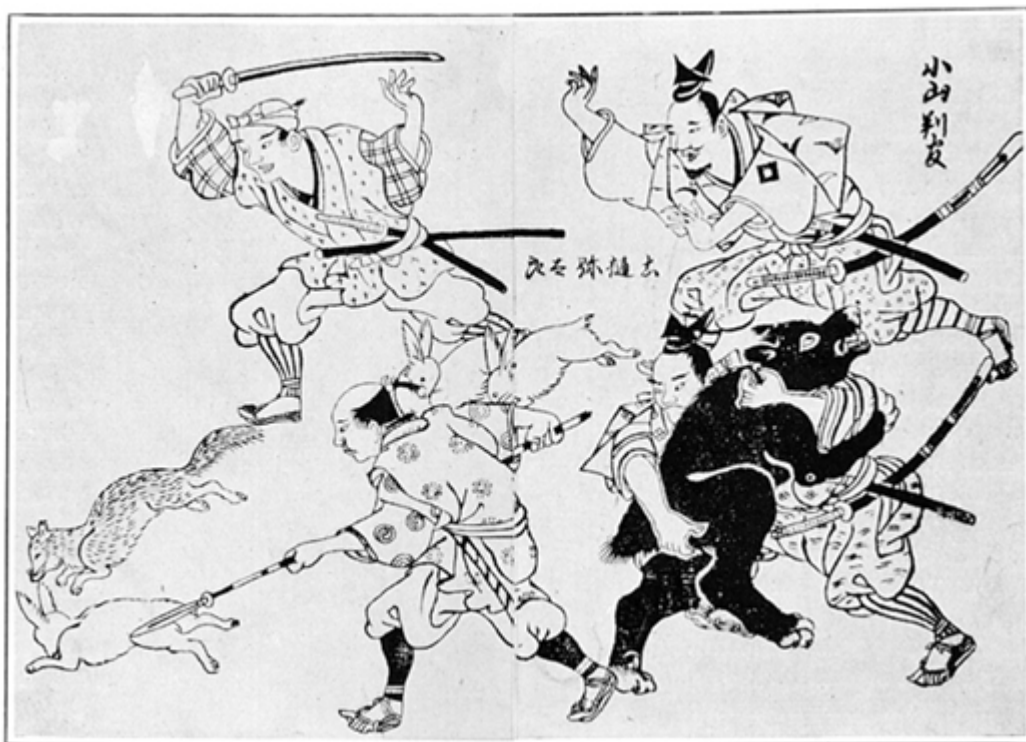
In China, its earliest representation may be seen in the rubbings taken from the stone slabs found in ancient tombs. There, in the *graffiti* which represent pilgrimages to the ancestral graves, Imperial hunting parties, and mythological scenes, it ever appears as an aid or messenger.



From a coloured woodcut by Shigemasa. Kintarō Ready for a Ride

In the chase, it is with the attacking party in pursuit of the boar and elk, suggestive of having been trained for the purpose like the leopard, so used in other countries.

In one of the mythological scenes, portraying a battle between the forces of the air and the forces of the waters, in erect position, with human companions, it seems to be commanding a company of marine creatures, armed for the fray with singular weapons. Its position quite recalls the Hindu episode of the siege of Lankā of the RĀMĀYANA epic, in which the bear forces under their leader, Jambavat, joined Hanuman's monkey forces in quelling the *rakshasa*.



From a woodcut, Ōsaka School. Koyama Hangwan in a Hunting Party

It sometimes may be seen in the sculptures of the Chou, Han, and T'ang dynasties, but rarely in the later periods.

In legend, very little concerning it has been recorded; and while there was an ancient belief in were-bears or manbears, as a *versipellis*, it never played an important part in life or thought.

One tale is recorded in the *Yi YÜEN* of a man in the Yüan kai period (A.D. 426) by the name of Huang Sui, who, living in Kao-p'ing, Hunan province, disappeared, causing his family much anxiety. His son searched for him for a month and finally found him in the mountains, where, in the hollow of a tree, he crouched as if in great fear and distress, and his body from his head to his waist was covered with hair resembling that of a bear. When questioned regarding his singular condition, he replied, "It is a punishment inflicted upon me by heaven; I cannot escape it." Whereupon the son burst into tears and left him to his terrible fate. Several years afterwards he was seen by woodcutters, who reported that he had become entirely transformed into a bear.





From a woodcut by Morikuni. After a Swim

A similar legend is told of a man named Kwun, the Prime Minister of the Emperor Yao, who, after being disgraced for having drained off the inundating waters in an improper manner, became changed into a yellow man-bear. Many years later, T'su-ch'an, an envoy from the kingdom of Ching to the kingdom of Chin found the ruler very ill. He was told that the king had had a dream that a yellow bear had entered his chamber. This T'su-ch'an recognized at once as the spectre of Kwun, and when asked what sort of an evil creature this could have been he said "When Yao imprisoned Kwun for life on Mount Yü, his *shên*, 'soul,' changed into, a yellow bear, in which form he entered into the abyss of Yü."

Generally, however, the bear was regarded as a beneficent creature and its appearance usually was believed to be auspicious. Pertaining to this there is a legend in connection with one of the Chou emperors, who dreamed that a bear entered his room from the south-east window and sat beside him. Then there followed a number of officials who paid it homage, and among the group was a celebrated fortune-teller who said to the Emperor: "Your Majesty, from the south-east seek a minister, for the bear is a trustworthy and wise animal." This advice was heeded and proved to be of great service to the Emperor.



From a woodcut by Tsukioka Masanobu. Kumagai Jirō Throwing the Bear

In Japan, while the bear has never been popular in art, it may be found in both sculpture and painting, and, like the badger, is quite a common motive in the illustrated books. In this country it was regarded as a sagacious and benevolent beast, very strong but not vicious. It is said not only to have a sense of right, but the discernment of a kind heart in a human being. Therefore it will never kill a good man, and has been known upon many occasions to rescue lost hunters and take them to its hole and care for them. A legend illustrative of these qualities is known as *Hachisuke*, "The Paragon of Ingratitude." This relates that Kiyemon, a peasant of Taka-yama in Hida, was overtaken by a snowstorm, and while unconscious rescued by a female bear. She took him to her cavern and laid him between her two cubs to keep him warm. Then, after restoring him, she fed him through the winter. Hunters hearing him tell of this remarkable experience were most covetous of so rare a trophy of the chase. Kiyemon at first refused to tell where the bear was to be found, but the bribe of a sum of money, equal to half the value of the flesh and skin of the animal, was too tempting and he finally yielded. With the price of this treason he bought a farm, but retribution overtook him, for his family perished and he himself was gored to death by his own ox.

The bear is quite commonly shown with Kintarō, the Golden Boy, as here in the woodcut by Shigemasa, entitled "Kintarō Ready for a Ride." This child of the forest was the son of the *rōnin*,

“wanderer,” Kurando, who was lost in the mountains and adopted by a *yama-uba*, “mountain woman,” one of the old women, half human, half goblin, who haunt the wilds. The boy not only grew to enormous size, but acquired great strength. One of his great feats was the uprooting of a huge tree which he placed over a foaming torrent as a bridge for his companions. He later attracted the attention of the *Shōgun* Yorimitsu, the famous Raikō, and, under the name of Kintoki, became the retainer of the great warrior, sharing his exploits, especially participating in the extermination of the Shuten Dōji.

The principal subjects in which the bear is shown are in episodes connected with the chase, such as “Koyama Hangwan in a Hunting Party,” and “Kumagai Jirō Throwing the Bear,” herewith shown.

There was a singular belief of ancient and mediæval times in the Occident, that bear cubs at birth were merely a shapeless mass which was worked into a proper body by the assiduous efforts of its mother—a belief which the poet Dryden described as follows:

The cubs of bears a living lump appear  
When whelp'd, and no determined figure wear.  
The mother licks them into shape, and gives  
As much of form as she herself receives.

The bear was held in high esteem by the Aino, the aborigines of Japan. They regarded it as sacred and, like other primitive peoples, immolated the animal and then feasted upon it in order to acquire its supreme strength and power. The sacrifice occurred at a yearly festival when the poor victim, a gentle, fearless bear that had been tenderly nursed and reared by a human mother, was tied to a tree and for three consecutive hours shot at with arrows, in the belief that the agony of a prolonged death would enhance the efficacy of the potion. During this ordeal the foster mother wept and wailed, but later joined the party and ate of the flesh.

The bear has played an important part with other primitive peoples who trace their origin to it, for which reason they use it as a totem.

Joaquin Miller, in his *LIFE AMONG THE MODOCS*, relates an interesting Indian tradition bearing on this subject. It states that in the dim and hazy past a terrible storm raged on Mount Shasta, and the Great Spirit sent his daughter, a beautiful russet-haired maiden, to beseech the weather genius to desist. The Great Spirit cautioned the maiden not to venture forth too far, and on no account to look out, lest she should encounter disaster. But impelled by curiosity, she disobeyed and in an unguarded moment was seized by the winds and blown down the mountain side over ice and snow into the forests, the haunts of bear. Here an old grizzly found her, and reared her with his own offspring. In time she was married to his eldest son and became the mother of a race—a cross between the human and *Ursidæ* tribes—which proved to be the progenitors of the red-men of the forest. These grizzlies, however, differed from the bears of later times, for, while they lived in caves, they bore resemblance to man in that they not only walked on two legs, but talked and fought with clubs instead of with teeth or claws. But when they offended the Great Spirit by their conduct toward his daughter, he punished them by making them walk on all fours like other beasts.

This legend is still told by the Indians, and they maintain that of all animals, the bear is nearest to man; hence they will never kill one. And should a bear kill an Indian, the latter's body is respectfully burnt and the spot commemorated by a crude monument made of stones.

The belief that the red race was part bear was held by many of its tribes. There are stories told of the Amerind of the Western continent—as well as their counterparts among the peoples of Syria and Dardistan, and some countries of Europe—which state that girls were abducted by bears and became the mothers of beings but half human.

But among bear subjects, that of the legend pertaining to the twin constellations, Ursa Major and Ursa Minor, is of the greatest interest. This had its origin in a Greek myth in which Callisto of Arcadia, having incurred the jealousy of Juno, was changed into a bear. Areas, the son of Callisto, while hunting, was about to kill her, when Jupiter, on watch, diverted his arrow and likewise transformed him into a bear and then exalted both of them to a place in the heavens as the Great and

the Little Bear. Then Juno, enraged that such honour should be bestowed upon her rival, and fearing that she might be supplanted, appealed for aid to her foster parents Tethys and Oceanus to bar the pair from their ocean dominion. Hence, the two bears became fixed in the heavens and ever revolve around Polaris, never being able, like all the other stars, to sink below the horizon into the waters of the great deep.

The Chinese do not associate these constellations with the bear. Ursa Major, which they call *Petou*, is worshipped as the residence of the Fates, where the duration of life and other events relating to mankind are measured and meted out.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE CAT AND THE DOG

*Philosopher and comrade, not for thee  
The fond and foolish love which binds the dog,  
Only a quiet sympathy, which sees  
Through all my faults and bears with them awhile.  
Be lenient still, and have some faith in me,  
Gentlest of sceptics, sleepest of friends.*

JULES LAMAÎTRE.



From a painting by Kōshōko

THE cat and the dog in the Far East do not appear to have enjoyed the intimate relationship to family life that they hold in the West. These two dumb animals so affectionately regarded in the Occident as adjuncts to the household—the happy companions not only of childhood but of later life, bringing cheer and comfort to many a lonely soul—have ever among all peoples elicited more than usual interest on account of their diverse characteristics.

The fact that two pawed creatures so similar in physique should be so different in their habits and modes of expression has led to much philosophic speculation. Even children learn early that it is unwise to tease a cat after its tail begins to manifest undue agitation, while they likewise know that, quite to the contrary, when a dog wags its tail, it is expressing supreme delight, for in each case this appendage is the barometer of the animal's moods.

The cat, through the ages, has suffered from an undeserved reputation of being cunning, deceptive, stealthy—even malicious—a reputation doubtless due to those qualities which belong to all animals of solitary and nocturnal natures, animals which are generally misunderstood. Being constituted to live a night life, it naturally reverses the common order and sleeps during the day, and consequently when it sits drowsing for hours, apparently holding silent deliberations with utter indifference to its surroundings, it is regarded as weird and mysterious.

Because its eyes, created to see in the darkness, glow with a fiery light at night, and its fur coat emits tiny sparks of electricity, particularly on winter nights, it has been associated with witches and necromancy.

On the other hand, the dog, gregarious and naturally social, voracious and sanguine, has not only been held to be guileless, but benevolent, from its frank fearlessness and loyalty to humanity. Its attachment to its master and its self-sacrifice have placed it as man's best friend among animals.

While the dog, in popular estimation, enjoys the greater regard, the cat has its admirers—even lovers, and a host of them as well—who recognize in it a grace and loveliness unparalleled. Its appeal is through the aesthetic sense and the lure of coquetry, for at this art it is an adept. It is the beauty of its lithe and sinuous body; the grace of its rhythmic movements, so pleasant to the eyes, as well as its exquisite poise and refinement of manners; its self-possession and controlled movements, implying a restraint significant of much reserve force, that constitute its charm.

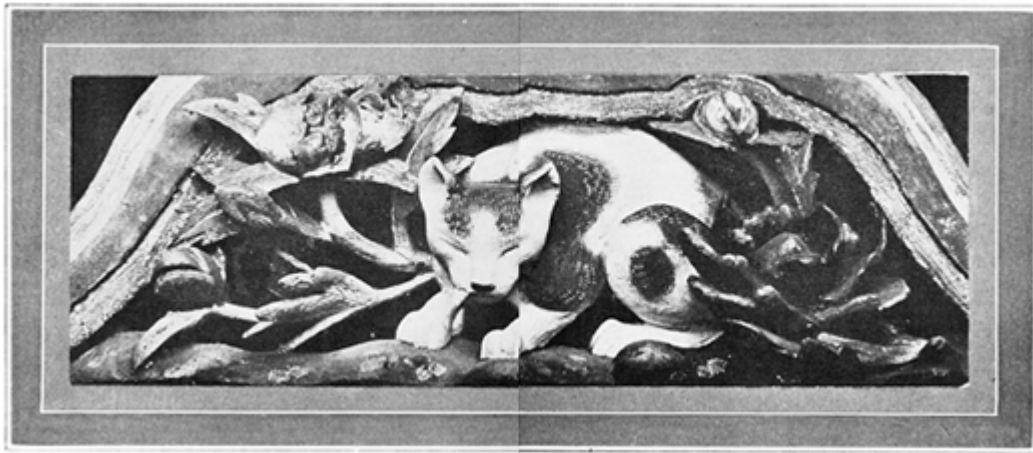
Of all animals it is the most cleanly, keeping itself fresh and well-groomed with naught but its tiny tongue. Its suppleness is likewise exceptional, for it is a well-known fact that if it accidentally falls from any height, it always lands on all four feet; while its agility gives it a freedom to roam at will, since a wall must be unusually high which it cannot scale; and its powers of endurance and recuperation have credited it with having nine lives. Its patience is proverbial, for it is known to sit for hours, without a twitch to its eyelashes, watching for its prey. It is also courageous, never hesitating to attack its foe, the dog, whatever his size, and usually holds its own when the chances are equal. It is quick to detect human sympathy, but wary of bestowing its favour until a friendship has been proven. Then it is ever delicate in its attentions, the very embodiment of courtesy and never effusive and familiar, as is sometimes the case with its canine rival. It is never servile, but always maintains its independence; and when its confidence has once been gained, it is a friend for life and becomes a sympathetic companion, soothing during hours of toil as well as hours of solitude, ever ready to respond to a caress by purring mellowly its expression of contentment, and then be ready for a romp during playtime.





From a coloured woodcut by Toyonobu

Unlike any other domestic animal, it is either much adored or violently disliked, particularly by women, who so fear it that they will not remain with it in the same room. When this occurs, our oriental friends say, "The reason a woman is so afraid of cats is because she was a rat in her last incarnation." Be this as it may, the cat must radiate some influence which some people find most disturbing. What it is has not been determined, and when mysteries defy understanding, the explanation generally is, "it is planetary." And if it be true that, as Sinnet says, "The evolution of animal life proceeds progressively through a chain of seven planets, several of which are unknown to science, since they consist of matter so ethereal that they do not reflect light and are therefore designated as 'dark,' it might be inferred that the graceful and attractive Madam Mew is a recent arrival from one of those dark abodes, bringing with it the characteristics of its late residence.



From a wood-carving by Hidari Jingorō. The Sleeping Cat



From a porcelain image. The Inviting Cat

But whatever the cause of its peculiar qualities, they have been observed not only by the occidentals but by the orientals as well, for in the Chinese classification of animals according to the *Yang* and *Yin*, the masculine and positive, and the feminine and negative principles of nature, the dog is assigned to the *Yang* and the cat to the *Yin*, for the Chinese claim that the cat has supernatural powers for working evil, while the dog possesses similar powers for counteracting it. Yet notwithstanding this, both animals play a double rôle in legends of superstition, one in which as demons they are feared, and the other as worthy associates which render service to mankind.



From a painting by Yuho. Cat and Peony

In the Middle Kingdom the cat is known by the name of *mao*, but is frequently referred to in an affectionate vein, as *nu mu*, “hand-maiden,” due to its virtue of being able to keep the home free from disturbing and destructive rodents. In this capacity it has frequently been made the theme of the poet, as in the following:

My house is over-run by rats.  
 They gnaw my books,  
 They scratch my boxes,  
 They steal my sleep.

I welcome and welcome you, little maid.  
 I have spent the day preparing your bed.  
 To-night I shall sleep  
 And my books shall be preserved  
 With a tempting fish  
 On a willow branch,  
 I would gladly welcome  
 A new hand-maiden.

HUANG TING CHIEN, Sung dyn.  
 Of food, there is plenty of fish,  
 And for a playmate, a parrot,  
 So come, lie down beside me,  
 While I sleep.  
 MENG CHENG MING, Bung dyn.

The Chinese also find the cat useful in another respect. From ancient times it has been regarded as a time-piece, its eyes being said to record the hour of the day. For, as with all nocturnal creatures, the pupils of its eyes are enormously dilated in the dark, while during the day they are contracted to a mere vertical fissure, on account of their sensitiveness to the stimulation of light; therefore the habit—

which still prevails, when wishing to learn the hour—of running to the nearest cat and pulling up its eyelids.



From an earthenware image. The Inviting Cat

The Egyptians, to whom the cat was sacred, held the same view, claiming that its eyes changed with the course of the sun. The same comparison was also made with the moon on account of its waxing and waning from a crescent to a full moon and back again until it vanishes in darkness. Therefore the moon-goddess, Bast—whose name originally was Pasht, signifying “face of the moon,” later became abbreviated into *pas*, then changed to *pus* and finally became the familiar *puss*—was cat-headed. Hence, in the moontemples, cats were held sacred, and so numerous were they that the priestesses spent most of their time attending them, while sacrifice to them was a feature of the ritual, and at death their bodies were embalmed. And, when the owner of a cat died, the animal was sacrificed and placed within his sarcophagus—all of which doubtless accounts for the numerous cat mummies unearthed and displayed in museums.



From a coloured woodcut by Koryūsai

The superstitious reverence of this animal by the Egyptians, tradition relates, was the cause of their defeat by the Persian King, Cambyses, who gave to each of his soldiers a live cat instead of a buckler. The Egyptians, confronted by the object of their worship, retreated rather than raise a hand which might injure it. This feeling still prevails, for, at the present time, there is an endowed institution in Cairo which provides for all homeless felines.

The Moslems also entertain the highest regard for the cat, because it was much loved by Mohammed. It is said that upon one occasion he actually cut the sleeve from his robe rather than awaken the cat that was sleeping upon it. A cat, therefore, may enter any mosque, but a dog, which is regarded as unclean, would be instantly killed.

In China, the first reference to the cat is found in the *BOOK OF RITES*, which relates that, in ancient times, farmers made sacrifices to a cat-god named *Li Shou*, asking protection against the ravages of gophers. Again, the Eight *Shên*, "Harvest Gods or Spirits," to which the Emperor made sacrifices in the twelfth moon, included the cat, doubtless for the above-mentioned reason.

In connection with Chinese legends of sorcery, it is related that the cat, like the fox and the badger, has the power of transformation after it attains an age of a thousand years, for then the *hsing*, "vital spirit," of all sentient beings, having been strengthened with age, is enabled to take human shape and haunt mankind. These legends are generally of tradition only, since very few appear in literature. The first mention of such an one occurred during the Sui dynasty (A.D. 595), and relates that the Empress

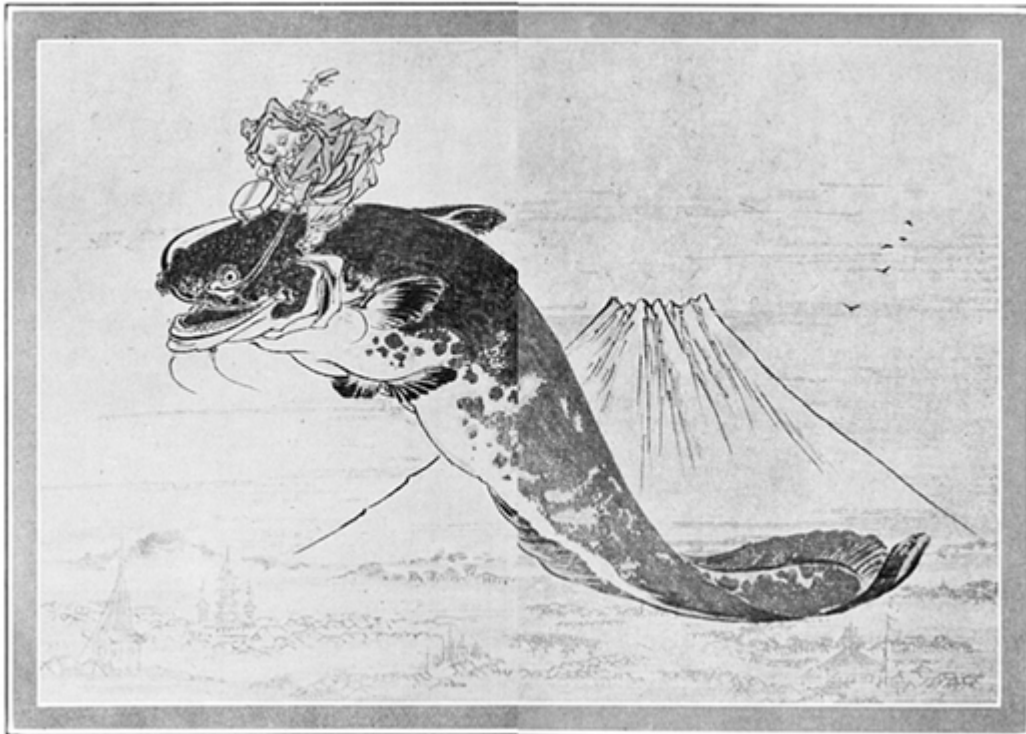
and one of her attendants were suffering from an unaccountable sickness which was traceable to the Emperor's own brother-in-law, Fuh-hu T'o. In proof thereof, a slave testified that T'o obliged his mother—who nightly sacrificed to a cat spectre—to enter the palace and bewitch the Empress so that she would bestow valuable gifts upon him. Both T'o and his wife were commanded to commit suicide, and all families keeping cat spectres were banished to the most remote regions.



From a woodcut by Kyōsai. Off for a Ride

Again, in the ancient work, CHI SHÊN LU, it is recorded that Wang Chien owned a cat which, bathing in pools after three days of rain, became transformed into a dragon and flew away. This was regarded as prophetic of Wang's future and was later substantiated, for he became the chief of bandits and ultimately an invincible king.

Another legend, often repeated, is that of the two Empresses of Kao Tsung, one of the Eastern Kingdom and one of the Western. The former, known as Empress Wu, had her rival cruelly murdered, and while the latter was expiring she swore she would return in the form of a cat, transform Wu into a rat and then throttle her. Wu being told this at once made provision that no cat should ever be allowed to enter the palace.





In Japan, while the wild cat is indigenous, the domestic animal—known by the name of *neko*—is an importation from China. To the Emperor Ichijō (987–1011) belongs the credit of introducing the little creature to this country; and so costly was it that only the Court could indulge in the extravagance. From the diary of Fujiwara no Sanesuke of the tenth century may be learned the degree in which this household pet was prized. It relates that “on the nineteenth day of the ninth moon of the year nine hundred and ninety-nine, a cat brought forth young in the palace. The Left and Right Minister had the task of bringing up the kittens and prepared boxes with delicacies of rice and with clothes as for new-born babes. Uma no Myōbu, a Court lady, was appointed their wet-nurse, all of which caused considerable consternation among the people.” Later, this same Emperor named a favourite cat after this lady, calling it Myōbu no Omoto or “Omoto, the lady-in-waiting.” The illustrations by Toyonobu and Koryūsai show the Court lady, Josan no Miya, with her pet cat.



From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. The Goblin Cat of Okabe

These imported animals were of the long-tailed variety. Later, as the cat rose in popularity, and a demand for it came from the masses, the short-tailed or what is termed the tailless cat—probably the only kind available—was imported from the Malayan Archipelago, its native home. Then as this variety became the familiar type, the long-tailed animal began to be regarded with superstition, since catdemons were believed to be thus identified. Hence, should a kitten be so unfortunate as to be born with an elongated appendage, the unwelcome member was forthwith removed.



From a woodcut by Kansi. Studying Her Rôle

Like China, Japan has many legends of cat sorcery, in which the *neko-mata*, “cat-demon,” is described as a huge creature with forked tail and possessing the power to assume human form and bewitch mankind. Of these legends, the best known is that of *Nabeshima no Neko*, “The Cat of Nabeshima,” which somewhat resembles *Tamamo no Mayé*, “The Nine-tailed Fox,” given in a preceding chapter. In this, Ō Toyo, the favourite lady of the household of a *daimyō* of Hizen, after a walk in the palace gardens with her lord, was secretly followed to her apartment by a goblin cat. In the middle of the night, the *neko-mata* throttled the lady, buried her body and assumed her form. Following the course of vampires who subsist on human blood, under the guise of the beautiful Ō Toyo, she preyed upon the life of the prince until he became very ill. His mysterious malady baffled all the remedies of the physicians, and since he suffered most at night, particularly with hideous dreams, a guard of a hundred men was placed in his room. But at ten o’clock every man was overcome by an unaccountable drowsiness, until the entire company was asleep. Night after night this occurred until the official counsellors were convinced that their lord was a victim of witchcraft and sought the services of the priest Ruiten of the Miyō-in temple. It then happened that while the latter was striving to dispel the evil influence, he saw a young *samurai* performing the ablutions which generally precede some great undertaking, and questioning him, learned that he was making preparation to pray for the recovery of the prince. So impressed was the priest with the loyalty of this young man—whose name he learned to be Itō Sōda—that he arranged to have him sit with the guards. Then when, at the accustomed hour, all were again seized with the spell, to keep himself awake, Sōda struck a dirk into his thigh, and, for his suffering, he was rewarded, for, thereupon, the false Ō Toyo entered the room. Scanning the company on her way to the prince’s couch, she discovered the newcomer and was greatly surprised to find him awake. Feeling herself detected she said to her victim, “How fares my lord this evening?” and then left the room.



From a woodcut by Kyōsai. In Complete Subjection

Sōda thereupon informed the counsellors of what had happened and they decided to put the woman to death, but she apprehending their purpose and in her cat-form made her escape to the mountains, where she sorely afflicted the people. The prince, hearing of her evil deeds, ordered a great hunt, in which Sōda was given the opportunity of killing the vicious beast.



From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. Kamata Matahachi Slaying a *Neko-mata*

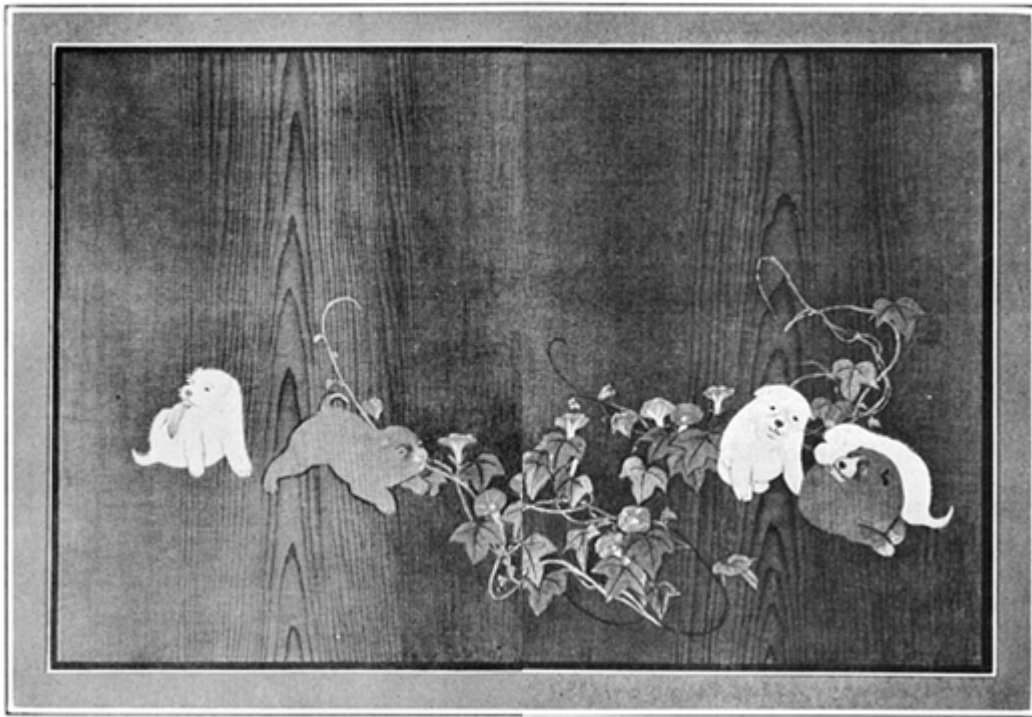
In one illustration by Kuniyoshi, a *neko-mata* is being slain by Kamata Matahachi of Matsuzaka, Ise, who was noted for his extraordinary strength and courage. In another, by the same artist, a similar cat goblin is shown in the act of terrorizing a young woman. In reality she was a wicked hag who lived in a hut under a group of old pines in the vicinity of the temple Hōsōmichi-jinsha at Okabe on the Tōkaidō. She habitually transformed herself into a monster cat and lay in wait for female attendants to the temple, whom she delighted to frighten. But in time her diabolical conduct reacted upon herself and turned her into a stone, the *neko-ishi*, “cat stone,” which still may be seen at this place.

While the cat, with many nations, has been associated with women, particularly old women, in Japan the *geisha*, “singing girl,” appears to have been selected for this distinction, doubtless due to the witchery she exercises over the opposite sex. In this rôle, she is a favourite subject of the great caricaturist Kyōsai, who, in two of the given illustrations, portrays her with the *namazu*, “catfish,” which, in jest, is made to represent the military official, who, in turn, has the reputation of allowing himself to be captivated and subjugated by this fascinating creature.



From a painting by Rosetsu. A Pair of Puppies

Cat-magic, therefore, has different forms. It may be malevolent, playful, or beneficial. For example: the tortoise-shell cat is believed by seafaring men to be lucky since it keeps the *O bake*, “honourable ghosts,” away, as well as all rats. Again, a simple and popular form of magic exercised for protection is connected with an image of a cat generally made from some sort of clay, but sometimes of papier-mâché and known as the *Maneki-neko*, “Inviting Cat,” examples of which are herewith given. This image is used as an amulet designed to attract business and promote prosperity. It is to be found at the entrance of restaurants and shops, where, with its ingratiating feline qualities and uplifted paw, it may invite customers and bid them enter. The *Maneki-neko* is likewise regarded as a worthy toy for children, for it is thought to be able to avert evil, particularly illness, for which reason it is worn by them about the waist to keep off pain. And not only the image of the animal, but the ideograph by which its name is represented, is regarded as efficacious, for which reason it is so commonly seen in the homes of cocoon-breeders and silk-weavers, who ever are in serious need of some remedy for rats.



From a painting by Ōkyo. Puppies and Morning-glory Blossoms

The cat has never been popular with artists, but when represented, it is frequently combined with the peony. This is said to have originated in an episode in which, while the Chinese Emperor Ming Huang (Jap. Gensō) of the T'ang dynasty, was walking in the palace gardens with his favourite concubine, Yang Kuei-fei (Jap. Yokihi), a cat jumped out from some peony bushes in pursuit of a butterfly. This so impressed his Highness that he immortalized the event by a poem, which later became a theme for painters.

The most celebrated rendition of the cat and peony in Japan is the wood-carving placed over a door of the shrine of Ieyasu at Nikkō, known as *Nemuri no Neko*, "The Sleeping Cat," of which an illustration is herein given. This production is from the chisel of Hidari Jingorō (1594–1634), Japan's greatest wood-carver, and is said to imply a desire that the great *shōgun* may perpetually enjoy the peaceful repose which this animal symbolizes. This cat is not only credited with having driven all the mice from the Nikkō temples, but it is regarded by the priests as a weather barometer, since it always foretells rain by winking.



From a painting by Kōga. Dog Boxes

The cat also figures in Buddhist lore, but negatively, for she is the only animal that is absent from among the mourners in the representation of *Nehan no shaka*, “The Death of Buddha,” being forbidden a place there, because she killed the rat that Māyā, the mother of Sākya, sent for medicine for the suffering lord.

The dog, in China known as *kou-tzū* and in Japan as *inu*, like the cat, has never inspired the painter and the poet to any great extent, and when represented, as in the accompanying illustrations by Ōkyo and Kōrin, only puppies at play are portrayed, and these are generally combined with the morningglory plant.



From a papier-mâché image. The Puppy Protectors

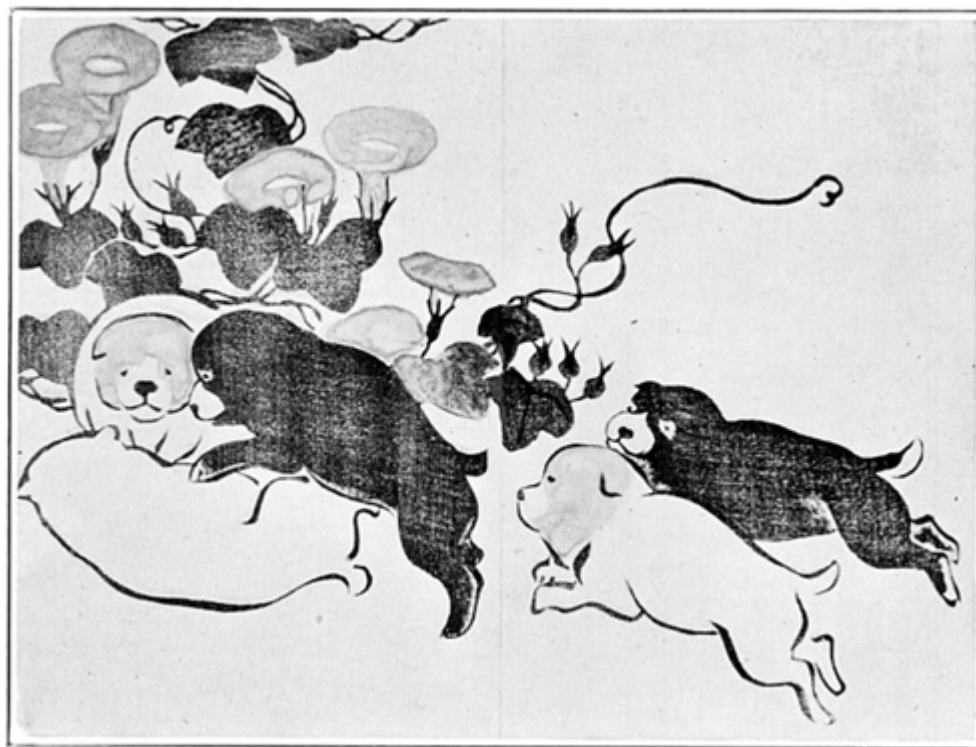


Legends relative to the animal are numerous, but few are distinctly picturesque or dramatic, and even then, they lack the elements of mystery which make cat stories so attractive. Among these legends are myths of dog ancestry, dog transformations, dog-demons, and dog-protectors, including others which associate the animal with the Creation, the Deluge, and eclipses.

The most notable is Bakin's tale of *Hakkenden*, the story of "The Eight Dogs," adapted from the Chinese. This narrates the exploits of eight dogheaded heroes, the miraculous offspring of Fuse-hime, whose hand was given to the dog, Yatsubara, as a reward for his having brought to her father, Satomi no Yoshizane, the head of an enemy who was besieging his province. These brave knights, popularly regarded as the embodiment of the Eight Cardinal Virtues, indirectly attributed to the dog, ultimately became the retainers of the Satomi family.

Another legend particularly attractive to the juvenile world is that of *Hanasaka Jiji*, the old man who, through the kindly services of his faithful dog, Shirō, made dead trees burst forth abundantly into bloom.

Of dog-deities, the *inugami*, there are two kinds: those employed in witchcraft, and those worshipped for protection. The former is the spirit of a dog, which, having been sacrificed, then enshrined for worship, is used as an instrument for diabolical deeds. The latter, which usually is attached to some temple, is believed to dispel fox, badger, and cat possession, and to shield its devotees from robbery, fire, sickness, and other forms of affliction. Of these, the sacred dogs of Mitumine San of Chichibu are the most famous. At this shrine two dogs, known as *yama-inu*, "mountain dogs"—one white and the other black—the attendants of the presiding deity, are actually kept as the chief protectors of the mountain; and pilgrims coming from all parts of the country, not only pay them homage, but carry away amulets containing their pictures with accompanying texts, which they paste upon their houses to ward off every form of calamity.



From a painting by Kōrin. Puppies with Morning-glory Blossoms

Mount Kōya-san is also believed to enjoy canine protection. For it is said that Kōbō Daishi, the great Shingon leader, while roaming over this mountain, met the Shintō god, Kariba Myōjin, who, with two dogs, one white and the other black, was hunting in this locality. The god promised

protection to the Buddhist monastery and in return the Shinto temple, Mu, was built. This incident, which accounts for the dog's being allowed on the mountain, all other animals being excluded, is quite exceptional. The dog, being generally regarded as unclean, is therefore forbidden in holy places; particularly his birth and death are thought to be an occurrence of pollution, as on the Island of Miyajima.

Another form of innocent and childish magic, similar to that of the *maneki-neko*—still a custom among the unsophisticated Japanese—is that practised by means of a small papier-mâché image of a dog, known as the *inubariko*, illustrations of which we herewith show. This object is generally found in the form of a box and is known also as the *inubaku*, “dog-box,” the dog being represented in a sleeping position, but frequently having a child's head, as portrayed in the accompanying reproduction of a painting by Kōga. It is a talisman believed to protect a new-born babe because, according to native authority, “the dog has an honest character and makes the demoniacal obstacles withdraw.” The *inubariko* are both male and female; the male, which looks to the left, holds the baby's charms; and the female, which looks to the right, contains toys and the mother's toilet articles. In ancient times this amulet was a necessity at weddings, but at present its principal use is for a child's *Miyamairi*, the first visit to the temple corresponding to the Western christening, for at this time the child receives its name. After the *inubariko* has served this worthy purpose, it becomes the child's toy, which, with a number of other *inubariko*—presented by relatives and friends—becomes the worthy associate of the *maneki-neko* in the protection of the infant. And so strong is the relationship between this fetish and the child that, if the latter is suffering from a cold in the head, the nose of the image is pierced with a gimlet; and when a child moans in its dreams, the *inubariko* is hung over its head, while the attendants cry “*inu no ko, inu no ko*,” “little puppy, little puppy.”

Again, in olden times, when a child was taken out at night, the ideograph for “dog” was written in red ink on his forehead. This, known as *ayatsukado*, is frequently referred to in the diaries of the nobles in connection with the Crown Prince, who was always thus guarded from evil influences.

The dog in the Orient is one of the twelve animals of the zodiac, hence the common reference to “the year of the dog,” “the day of the dog,” even “the hour of the dog,” to mark the time of events. But the animal in legend is a very different creature from the one which is generally seen by a visitor to the Far East. In Japan, a little creature, apparently bred as a pet for women in seclusion and called a *chin*, is most in evidence. It is no larger than a cat, has exceptionally large eyes and a nose so abbreviated that, in order to breathe, it is constantly sneezing. Being so timid and helpless from its delicate and frail organization, it can scarcely be classified with that species of *Canidæ*—the impetuous hound of the chase, the ferocious dog of war, and the fearless guardian of palace and temple—which Baron Cuvier says is “the completest and most useful conquest ever made by man since prehistoric times.”

The study of the history of the cat and the dog offers another example of mythological zoology which reveals the dark paths vainly trod by man in search of agencies which might not only free him from the afflictions of life but make him all-powerful. The comparison of the tender regard bestowed upon these innocent creatures to-day, with the treatment they received when ignorance and superstition befogged the human intellect, may at least, in one respect, mark the spiritual strides which have been made during the progress of civilization. Now enlightened man no longer looks to the lower animals for the sources of his strength and power, but knows that they lie only within himself.

ON SOME GRAVE BUSINESS, SOFT AND SLOW  
ALONG THE GARDEN-PATHS YOU GO,  
WITH BOLD AND BURNING EYES:  
OR STAND WITH TWITCHING TAIL, TO MARK  
WHAT STARTS AND NESTLES IN THE DARK,  
AMONG THE PEONIES.

—BENSON.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE HARE, THE SQUIRREL AND THE RAT

*A thousand silver flakes, from snow-drifts broken,  
Flutter in the autumn winds, beneath the white-faced moon.  
The divine mushroom and fragrant cinnamon wear a fleecy  
mantle.*

*The restless spirit of the Jewelled Hare is in the Jade Gate  
Though his helpless body lies upon a Golden Tray.  
Toward the fairy queen, Ch'ang-o, he gazes,  
Yearning for a magic Draught of Life.*

HSIEH CHÊ'NG CHI, *Ming dynasty.*



From a painting by Chiura

THE hare—known in China as *yeh t'u*, and in Japan as *usagi*—is a native of all parts of the world except Australia and Madagascar. The American species is called rabbit, though its name belonged originally to a smaller animal indigenous only to southern Europe and northern Africa, from which regions it was introduced into other countries and there under domestication developed into various breeds.

Both animals belong to the genus *Lepus*, being rodents with pairs of upper incisor teeth, a divided lip, long hind legs, a cocked-up tail, and long ears. They live in the open or among rocks in thickets, feeding chiefly upon herbage and bark. Their soft fur is usually grey or brown which, with some varieties, turns white in winter.

The rabbit is smaller than the hare and brings forth its young naked, blind, and helpless—the mother digging a deep burrow in the earth in which she bears and rears them. On the other hand, the hare's brood consists of husky leverets, which at birth have a soft fur covering and open eyes, whereby they very early are able to care for themselves in the shallow depression or form where they are produced.

The chief characteristic of the animals of the genus *Lepus* is fleetness. By nature the prey of carnivorous animals, for self-preservation they have been obliged to outrun their pursuers, and not only through their extraordinary swiftness, but by their cunning, has the tribe been perpetuated. In danger, at the first alarm, they sit upright to reconnoitre and then either flee to a hiding or seek to conceal their bodies by flattening them close to the ground. Not only by leaps and bounds do they cover great distances, but they also are able to swim, an instance being recorded of one that crossed an arm of the sea a mile wide.

In every quarter of the globe, for centuries, the little creature has been hunted for food and sport until it has become the very embodiment of fear and timidity, so manifestly expressed in its large startled eyes.

Numerous and singular are the oriental traditions relative to the generation of this animal. In one, the female is said to conceive by licking the coat of the male; in another by gambolling in sea-breakers in the full moonlight on the eighteenth day of the eighth month; while, still in another, this may occur by her merely gazing at the moon.

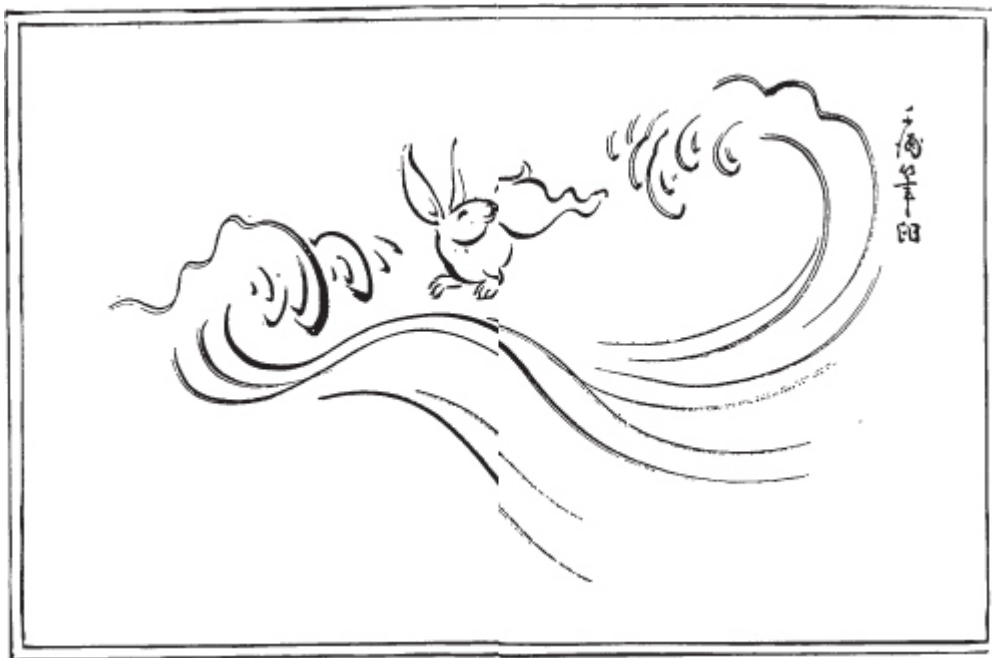


From a painting by Shūzan



From a drawing by Chiura

The association of the hare and the moon is common to the folk-lore of every quarter of the globe. It is even found in Mexico, and again in South Africa, where the Hottentots tell the story of how death came into the world through a mistake made by a hare's taking a message to the moon.



From a painting by Chiura. Through the Wave

In India, it exists among ancient Sanskrit inscriptions, suggesting its connection with primitive cults where it is supposed to have had its inception in the resemblance of the markings on the moon to

the shape of the animal. The Sanskrit name for “hare,” *sason*, meaning “the leaping one,” is indicative of a comparison between the leaps and bounds of a hare and the periodical changes of the moon, denoting an astronomical association. This theory is borne out by the hare’s being one of the twelve animals of the oriental zodiac, occupying the fourth house. Hence the Japanese refer to the fourth month of the duodenary cycle as *Utsuki*, the Hare Month.



From a painting by Itchō. Kintarō as Umpire

Again, the twelve zodiacal gods of the Brāhmans, also known as the Twelve Deva Kings (Jap. Jūni-ten or Jūni Ō), include a Moon Deva, Soma, sometimes called Chandra (Jap. Gwa-ten), who, holding a white hare reposing on a crescent moon, is shown in the illustration of a painting attributed to Shōga Takuma.





From an ancient temple painting. Jōgaisho, the Remover of Obstacles

Another Hindu deity, Sarva-nīvarana Vishkambhī, one of the Eight *Bodhisattva* found in northern Buddhist temples, is at times depicted not only holding this same symbol, but likewise wears the crescent moon in his hair dress. In Japan, this deity is known as Jōgaisho, which signifies “Effacer of Spots” and “Remover of Obstacles.” As in an accompanying illustration, he is frequently represented carrying a full moon enclosing the white hare.



From a painting by Chiura



From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige

The crescent moon is likewise one of the attributes of Avalokiteśvara, when appearing as Simhanāda. These deities generally possess a flaming nimbus, the tongues of which have become faded by time, as in the painting of Jōgaisho.

The legend most commonly known relating to the hare and the moon belongs to the Buddha birth stories of Indian origin. In this it is related that when Sākya was incarnate as a hare, he sacrificed

himself to assuage the hunger of the disguised Indra, and the latter, in gratitude, delineated the figure of the animal on the moon to commemorate the virtuous act.

The Chinese, from all accounts, inherited the Indian traditions; for records preceding the Han dynasty assert that the hare not only derives its origin from the vital essence of the moon, being ever subject to its influence, but also inhabits the moon. Subsequent to this, the Taoists claimed that a white hare is the servitor of Ch'ang-o—the queen of our luminary—and her genii, for whom it compounds the elixir of life.

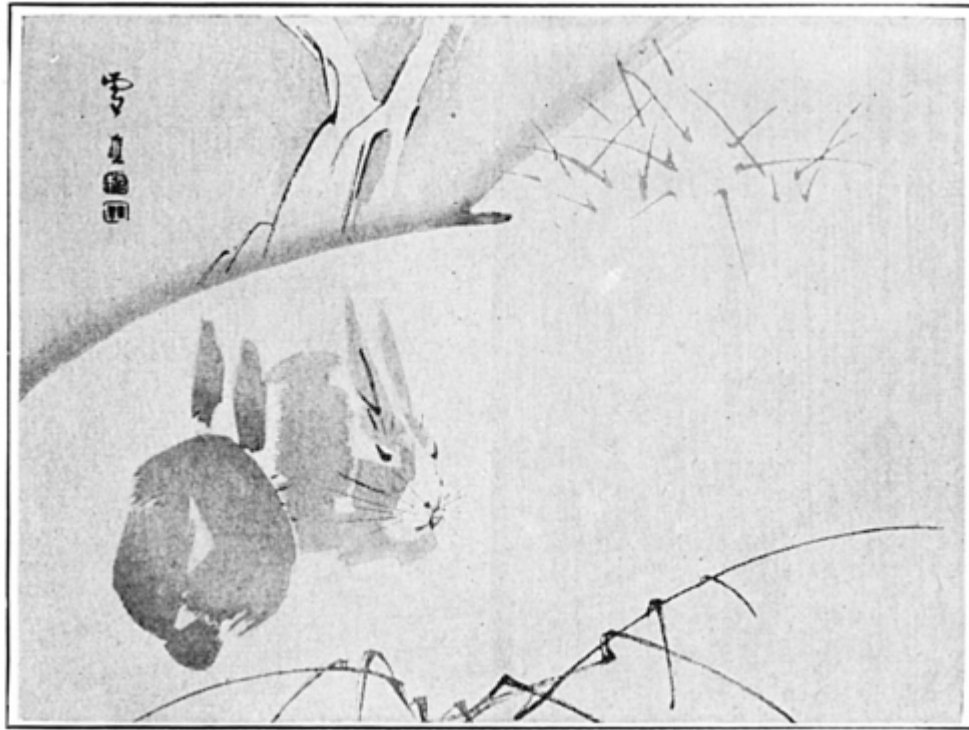


From a painting attributed to Shōga Takuma. Gwa-ten Shi, the Moon Deva

The white hare, which has had to live a thousand years to acquire its unsullied coat, has, from ancient times, been held divine. Its appearance, therefore, has always been regarded as an auspicious

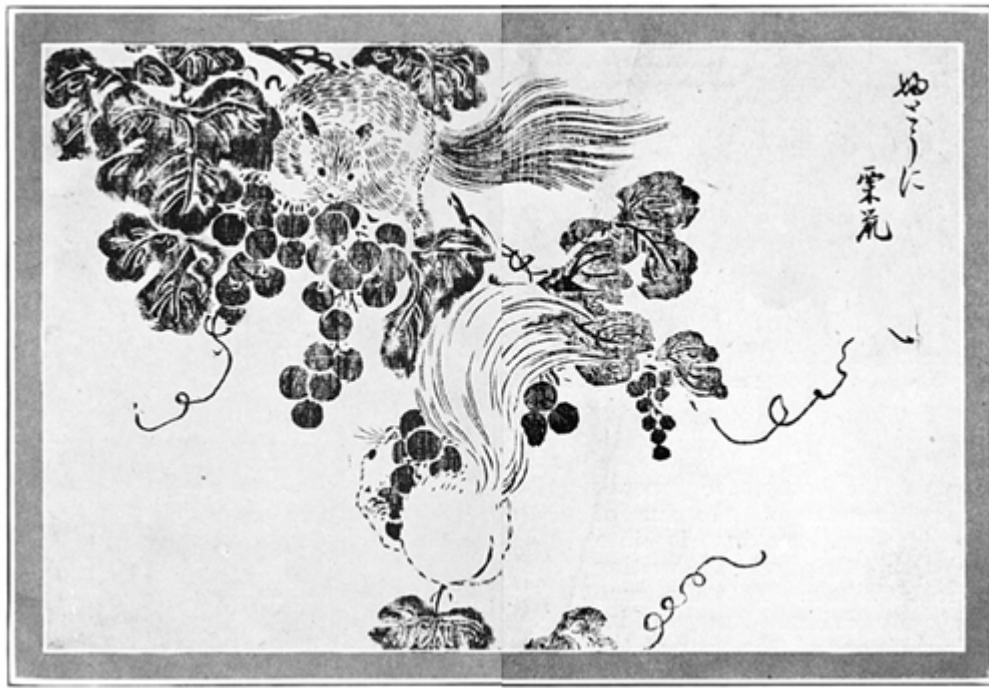
omen, portending the reign of a beneficent and just ruler. This idea had its inception in the tradition that in the golden age of the Chou dynasty white hares gambolled in the streets of the capital city. From that remote time, whenever a white hare has been discovered it has been captured and sent to the Emperor as a tribute.

The legend of the white hare plying his pestle and mortar in the moon—as illustrated by Chiura—is applied, as follows, by a sage of old to hermits who have forsaken the wilds to enter the political career of a scholar:



From a painting by Sesshō

“Thick clouds darken the night and the palace guards sleep. The white hare pounding his drugs dreams of the outer world. Cautiously he opens the crystal gate and joyfully steals forth. Where mountains and waters lure—with soft beds of sweet-scented grasses, in cool shadows under leafy canopies—in the realm of Ch’u, his goal he seeks. But short is his freedom, for he knows not the wiles of man. He is caught and sent to the Emperor. In a jade room of a golden palace, with the phoenix and unicorn as companions, he spends a weary existence. No city dust dulls his pure white coat, neither do the wintry snows enrich its lustre. But what to him is high estate, when beyond his walls the moon waxes and wanes and waxes again, unseen? Longingly he dreams of the past and joyfully would he resume his duties with Ch’ang-o, could he but return to her.”



From a woodcut by Itcho. Squirrels on Grape-vine

Not all the divine hares are white, for the ancient writings not only describe a red hare which, in company with the phoenix and the unicorn, appears as a harbinger of peace and prosperity, but also a black hare of great beauty. Referring to the latter, Chang Ssü Wei writes:

The black hare is more uncommon than the white hare. It comes from the North Pole, bringing greetings from the moon goddess, and is auspicious of a successful reign. Now may the magic medicine be pounded with a jade pestle and the divine nectar

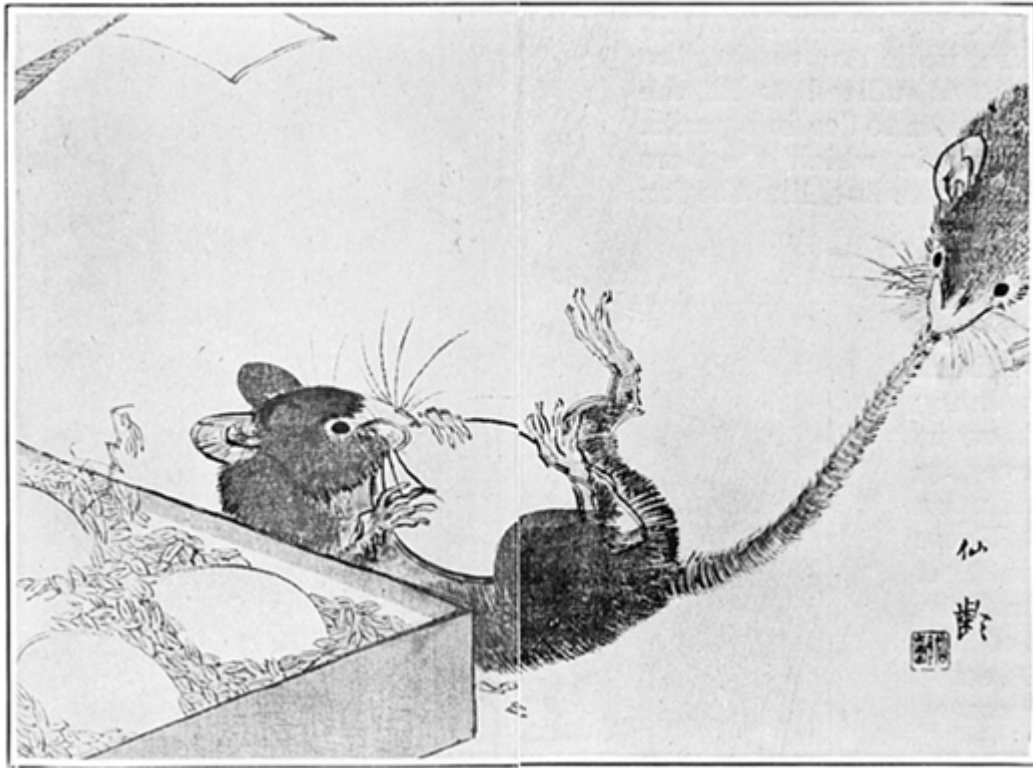




From a woodcut by Itchō. The Attributes of Daikoku

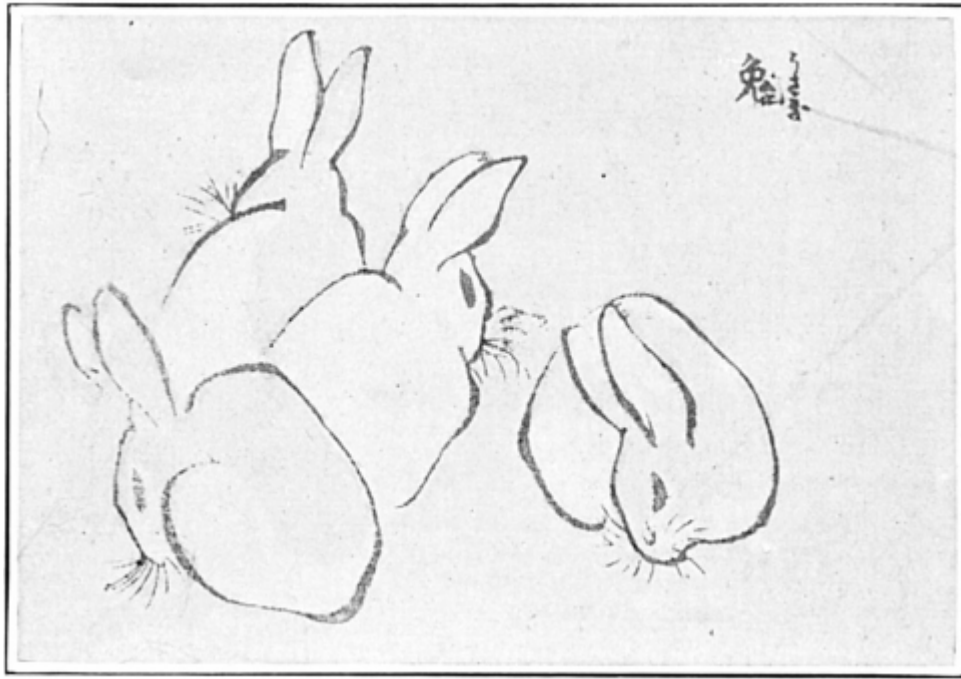
From China “The Hare and the Moon where it is known as *Tsuki ni Usagi*. But in the latter country, instead of compounding a magic draught, the little animal is made to perform the more practical duty of pounding rice in preparation for the food which is the real elixir of life.

This substitution is said to have originated in another of those homophones, so common to oriental symbology, in which the characters for “full moon” and for “rice cake” have the same sound. The rice cakes here referred to are the two great dumplings used for the New Year’s celebration known as *kagami mochi*, “mirror dumplings,” made in imitation of the case which holds the sacred mirror—one of the three divine relics kept in the shrines at Ise. These two cakes, one piled on top of the other, typify the principles of *In-yō*—the *Yin* and *Yang* of the Chinese—the smaller cake on top representing *In*, the feminine principle, and the larger one below, *yō*, the masculine.



From a painting by Senrei. Carrying Away the Booty

In China the hare is also one of the animals sacrificed in the temple of the Imperial Ancestors. When so used it is known by the name *ming shih*, "bright eyes," because it is said that the hare's eyes grow larger and brighter with age, a fact not true of any other animal. Reference to this is made in the biography of Mao Ying, "Hair Point," a native of Chung Shan, Middle Kingdom, in which it is related that in the dim and hazy past, when the Emperor Yü allayed the waters of the deluge, Mao Ying's ancestor received the hereditary title of *Ming Shih*. Then immediately following his death, this first lord appeared to his son in a dream, saying: "We are the offspring of divinity, therefore we must keep our family spirit upright and pure." Ming Shih was subsequently apotheosized as one of the twelve zodiacal deities and, while all his descendants were scholars, several rose to exceptional distinction. One of the eighth generation, by the name of Ju, retired to the Jung Shan, where, by magic, he not only was able to make himself invisible, but to fly to the moon, visiting Ch'ang-o, the presiding genius, and Ch'an Ch'u, the three-legged white toad.

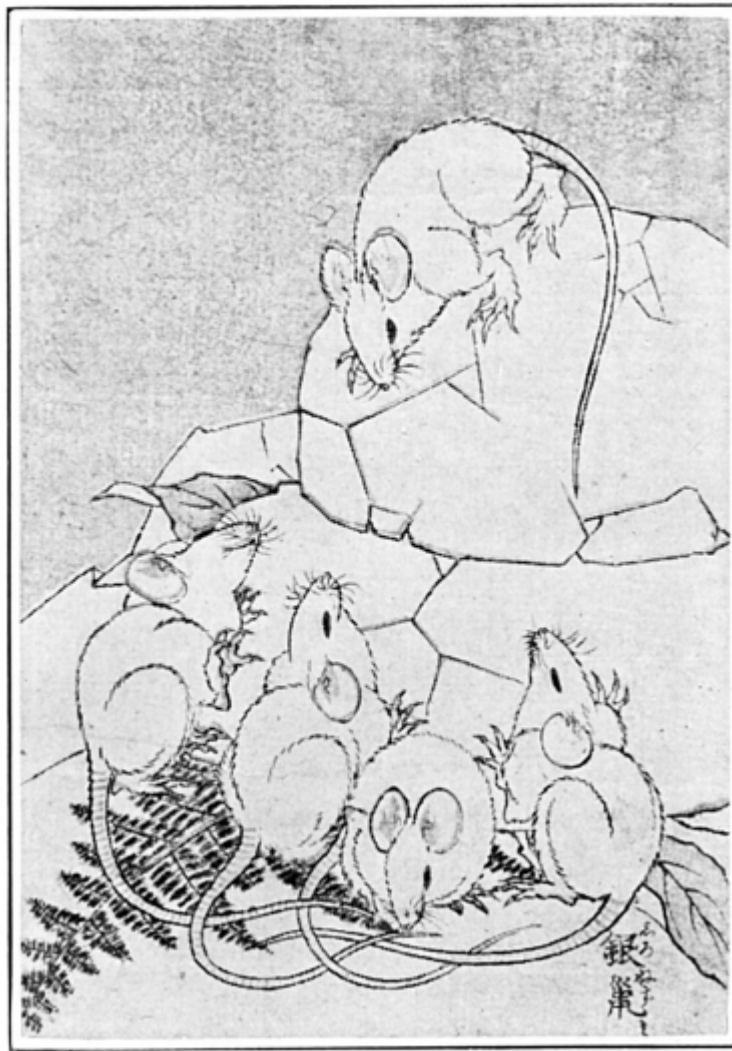


From a woodcut by Hokusai

Another descendant named Chun, who lived in Tung Kua, Eastern Suburb, was famous for his cunning as well as for his ability to run. He was said to have been able to run so swiftly that in a race with the celebrated dog, Han Lu, he came out victor, but later paid with his life the price of his success when Han Lu conspired with the powerful falcon, Lung Chiao.

The comparative fleetness of the hare and the hound is exemplified in a legend in which two ancient kings sought to contend for supremacy. The king of Chi was about to invade the country of Wei, but abandoned the project when he was told the sad fate of Han Lu, the swiftest of dogs, and Tung Kuo Chun, the craftiest of hares—two animals which chased each other around a mountain five times until they both succumbed to exhaustion and were captured by a farmer who chanced by. “So,” said the statesman of Wei, “may two countries battle with each other until they are so weakened that they easily become a prey to another.” The argument was convincing and the countries of Chi and Wei continued to enjoy an uninterrupted peace.

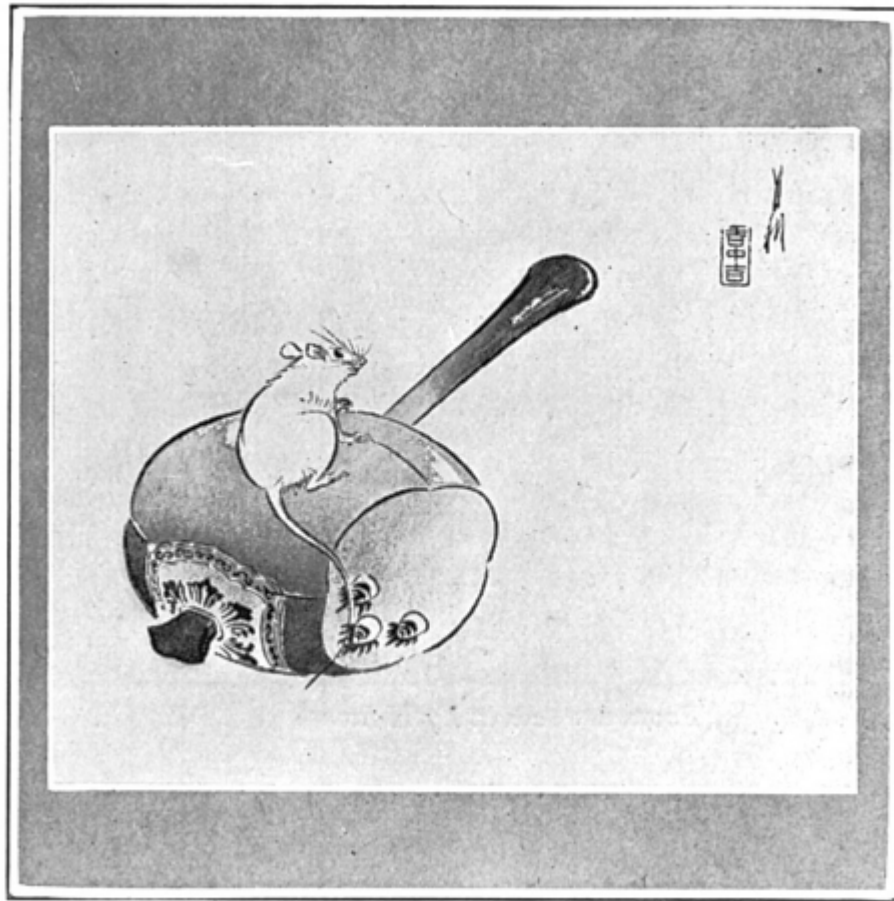
The swiftness of the hare also led the Chinese to name their horses after it, as in the case of the renowned steed of Lü Pu, which was called Chi T’u Ma, “Red Hare Charger.”



From a woodcut by Hokusai. A New Year's Feast

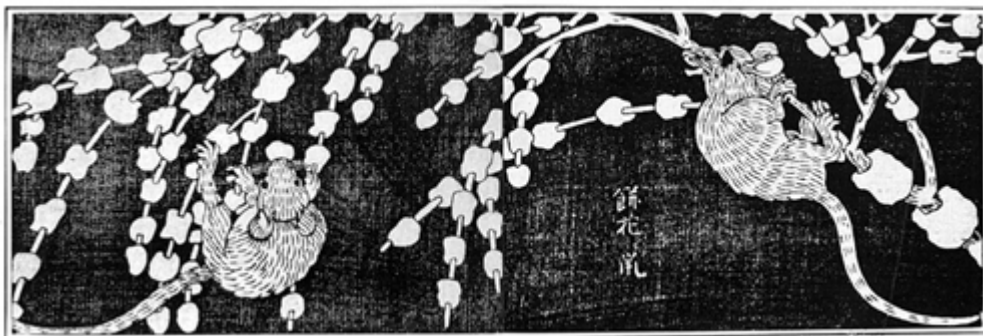
The hare was also prized because it supplied such unusually fine hair for the making of writing brushes. This hair was called *ch'in hao*. It was gathered in the autumn when the down of the animal was most delicate. Its first use was attributed to Mêng T'ien, a general serving under Ting Chou Chih, the first emperor of the Ch'in dynasty, who, while marching his army of two hundred thousand troops to the north, in passing through the Chung Shan mountains, varied the monotony of his journey by hunting the hares that there abounded in great numbers. In taking an account of the booty, the general, attracted by the extraordinary fineness of the fur of the animals, conceived the idea of making it into brushes. From that remote time the best of writing brushes have been made from rabbit's hair. That the same custom prevails in Japan is quite evident from an inscription found in a new year's *surimono* of the year of the rabbit, the subject of which is entitled *Kyogetsu*, "Crazy Moon," and the poem below reads,

The first writing of the year of the rabbit done with a brush made of rabbit hairs.



From a painting by Gekkō. Ready for Service

The Egyptians, like the Chinese, were also attracted by the staring eyes of the hare, which were regarded as significant of an Opening, or the Beginning of Events, and Periodicity, particularly with reference to pubescence. With this meaning, the hare, regarded as the feminine element, in combination with another life symbol, the egg, as the masculine element, typified the generation which manifests itself during the Easter season—the life-opening period, and the beginning of another year. Hence, the European custom of celebrating Easter with the rabbit and the egg.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. Enjoying the New Year's Decorations

It is interesting to note that the ancient Aztecs likewise held the hare in high esteem. It was one of the four chief signs symbolizing the four elements, known as *Tochtli*, the hare, and dedicated to Tevacayohua, the god of earth. The other signs were *Calli*, the house, dedicated to Xintencli, god of

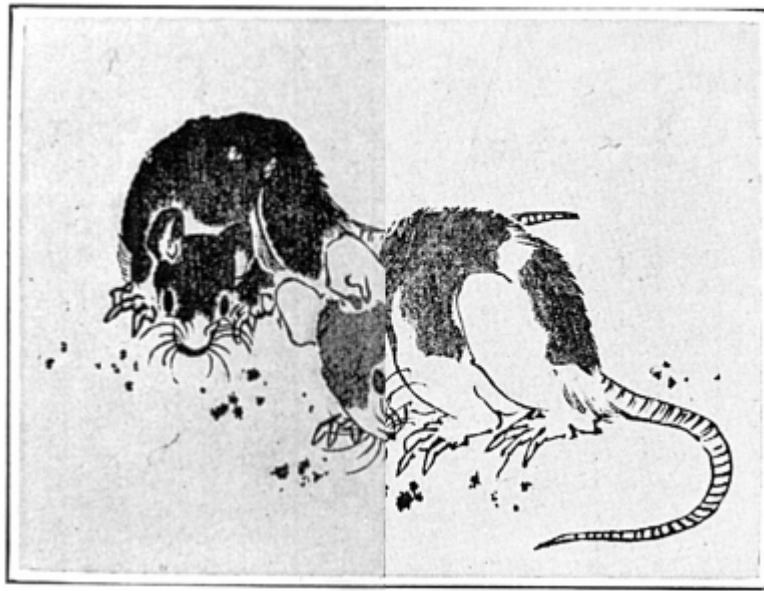
fire; *Tecpatl*, the flint, dedicated to Quetzalcoatl the god of air; and *Acatl*, the cane, dedicated to Tlaloc, the god of water.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. Daikoku's Workmen

The hare is unusually prolific. Pliny says it is of double sex, while another writer claims it changes its sex every year, and by many peoples it is held not only as unclean but unlucky. When a Kalmuk sees one, he utters a cry and strikes a blow in the air to avert the consequences. The Hottentots kill it but do not eat it; in fact, its flesh is frequently tabooed for fear of imbibing the natural timidity of the animal. Again, its appearance in some villages of both England and Germany is thought to forebode a fire, while its crossing the line of march of an army has sufficed to fill the troops with terror and cause them to flee in a panic.





From a woodcut by Keisai. Masayoshi

Numerous are the legends in which the hare is said not only to bewitch people but, like the fox and other animals, to transform itself into human form for the same purpose or become the instrument through which some sorceress plies her demoniacal activities. Particularly among the Aino of Japan, it is thought to possess the evil eye by which it can cast a spell upon anyone it encounters. These people have a tradition that hares were evolved from hairs plucked from the skin of the heavenly deer and cast to earth by Aioina, the deity who created the first ancestor. Then again, quite the reverse of this belief, the hare's head and foot are held as a countercharm against witchcraft, as in the Tyrol, where its head is quite commonly seen on the house gables. Also among the unsophisticated negroes of the United States, the foot of the animal is highly prized as a fetish to ward off evil and invite prosperity; but, in order that it may constitute a lucky charm, it must be the left foot of the animal, caught jumping over a grave in the dark of the moon, by a red-haired, cross-eyed negro. These simple people have many folk-tales relating to the cunning of the rabbit as it outwits the fox, many of which are told in a most attractive manner, by Mr. Harris in his *UNCLE REMUS* stories.

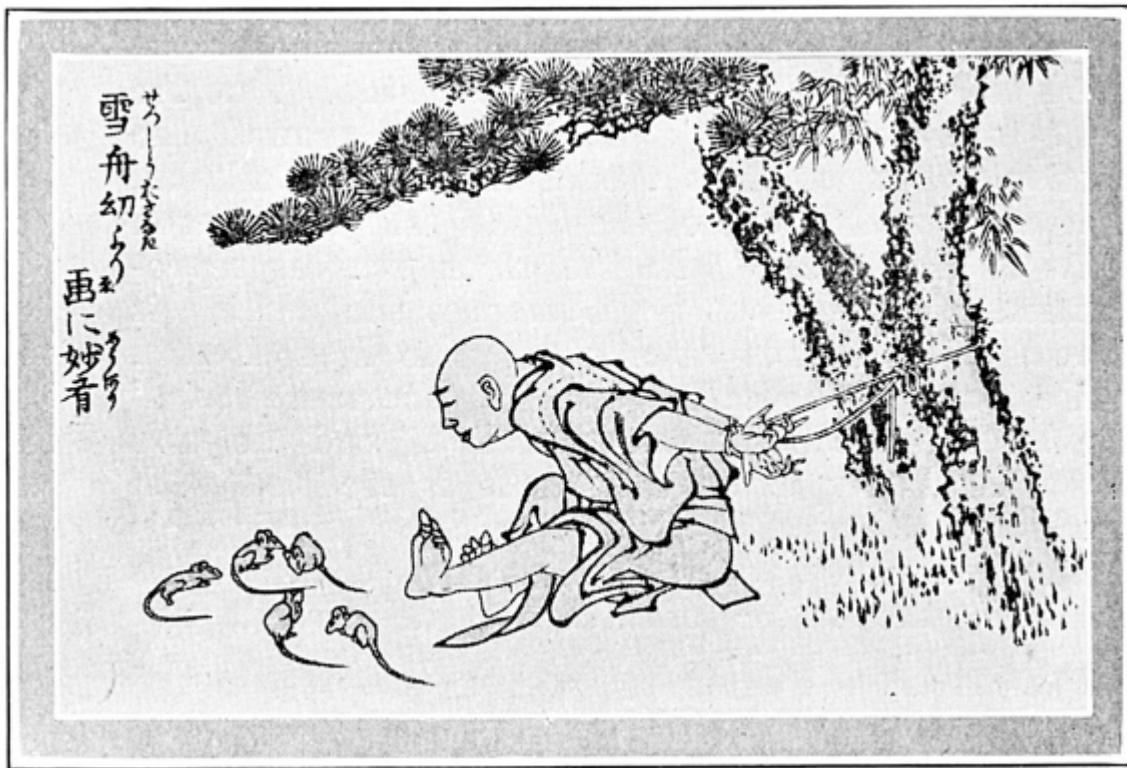


From a coloured woodcut by Utamaro. Daikoku, the God of Wealth

In Japan, legends of the hare are infrequent—the only two of any prominence being *Kachi-Kachi-yama*, “The Crackling Mountain,” referred to in [Chapter XIX](#), and *Usagi to Wani*, “The Rabbit and the Crocodile,” sometimes referred to as “The White Hare of Inaba.” The latter relates to a little rabbit that, living all alone on the island of Oki, very much longed to visit its friends on the mainland just across the channel at Inaba. How to get over this great body of water, however, was a cause of much concern. Therefore, after considerable thought and planning, it succeeded in beguiling the crocodiles of that region into forming a line across the water so that it might count them in order to settle the question as to whether there were more rabbits or crocodiles in the world. Then, with the reptiles in single file, it jumped from one to the other until it reached its goal. But so pleased was it, not only with having accomplished its purpose, but with having tricked the crocodiles, that it turned and taunted them for being so gullible. For this, however, it paid a very dear price. The angry crocodiles at once pursued, caught, and severely punished it, leaving it bleeding on the road, stripped of all its fur.

Then, to add to its woes, upon the advice of a cruel man that happened to come by, it not only bathed itself in the salt water on the shore, but exposed itself to the hot sun. The pain was so severe that it cried aloud until another man came along who, of entirely different disposition, kindly and mercifully showed it how to wash off the salt in a pool of fresh water, and then roll its poor little body in the petals of flowers until the pollen might stick to and heal it. The man proved to be the Shintō god, Ōkuni-nushi no Mikoto, familiarly known as Daikoku.

The hare is generally combined with the wave or the moon, in some form, and frequently is shown nestling in the *tokusa* grass, looking up at its brother in the luminary, or hiding under a *hagi* bush, as depicted in the given illustrations by Shūzan and Hiroshige.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Youthful Sesshū

Another animal used in traditional subjects is the squirrel, known to the Chinese as *sungshü*, “pine rat” (Jap. *risu*). As shown in the woodcut by Itchō, it is represented generally with the grape-vine, a subject which first appeared in a Chinese painting by Ming Yüan Chuang, a famous artist of the Sung dynasty. Since that time it has been done by both Chinese and Japanese painters. It likewise has been used quite extensively as a decorative motive for all the arts of the Far East. The most notable example of its appearance exists at the temple of Zuganji at Matsushima, in the carving by Hidari Jingorō.

The Chinese say that the reason for combining the squirrel and the grape-vine—apart from their equally picturesque possibilities—is, that as the vine is able to creep all over and cover everything in its course, so the squirrel, in its perpetual scampering about, can with equal facility cover every available surface within the range of its activities.

The only reference, however, to the signification of the squirrel in oriental literature is derived from the Aino, who claimed that these little arboreal creatures were the cast-off sandals of Aioina, the Divine. They called it *At kamui*, the Divine Prolific One, and prescribed its flesh for infecundity. They likewise appealed to it when in need of a new set of teeth, doubtless suggested by its own gnawing tools.

The remaining animal of this chapter, the rat—known to the Chinese as *shü* and to the Japanese as *nezumi*—the omnipresent pest of every part of the globe, and the loathed of the white race, appears to have been highly respected in the Orient. The ancient Chinese saw in this generally despised creature such extraordinary qualities that they gave to it the first place in their zodiac, where it represents the beginning of things or the first cause. The intelligence it manifests in locating, acquiring, and hoarding its booty, caused it to be selected as the symbol of industry and prosperity, for which reason one particular specie, known as the *chin ch’u*, “cash rat,” is never molested but allowed to remain in their houses.

A proof of the feeling entertained for this rodent is expressed by an ancient Chinese poet in some verses entitled “The Complaint of the Rat,” wherein he set forth most sympathetically the unhappy

existence of the little creature which, hunted and hounded, is obliged to live in the darkness of hidden places and to subsist upon stolen refuse.

The Japanese hold similar traditions of the animal. With them it is a prime favourite, for they say “getting rich means to invite the rat, since this creature will only remain where there is plenty of food.” In fact, some writers state that in the duodenary cycle, the month of December was assigned to the rat because at this time the creature enters the house, there being nothing to eat on the outside. But the chief interest for the animal centres around the particular rat which is the attendant of Daikoku, the god of wealth, one of the *Shichi-fukujin*, “Seven Gods of Happiness.” In the accompanying reproduction of a woodcut by Utamaro, the godling is shown with all his attributes: the *komedawcira*, “rice bales,” the *takara-bukuro*, “treasure bag,” the *konton no tsuchi*, “sacred mallet,” and the *fuku nezumi*, “lucky white rat.” He is credited with producing the wealth of the world by shaking his mallet, causing to fall therefrom either coins or *tama*, the latter of which is delineated, not only on the ends of the mallet, but on the rice bags as well.

Daikoku—apparently patterned after the Indian elephant-headed god of good luck, Ganesha, who also has a rat attendant—is particularly invoked by merchants whom the *fuku nezumi* rewards by enticing customers and inviting trade for their special benefit. Even salesmen who are industrious and conscientious are called *fuku nezumi*, but those who are idle and dishonest are referred to as *kuro nezumi*, “black rat.”

Sometimes Daikoku is shown with a whole family of rodents which serve him in various ways, but generally by handling and storing his rice bales, as shown in the woodcut, by Hokusai, entitled “Daikoku’s Workmen.”

Again, the rat in combination with other attributes of the god—such as the rice-bales, the treasure bag, and the sacred mallet as in the woodcut by Itchō, or merely the latter as in the painting by Gekkō—is a common art motive.

Another popular subject is the rat feasting on the New Year’s decorations, which are made of riceflour, such as the *kagami mochi*—before referred to—and the *mochibana*, “rice cake flowers,” which are attached to a tree branch, both of which are shown in accompanying illustrations of designs by Hokusai. But the composition of this artist which most delights and charms is the one entitled “The Youthful Sesshū”—illustrating an episode in the life of one of Japan’s greatest artists.

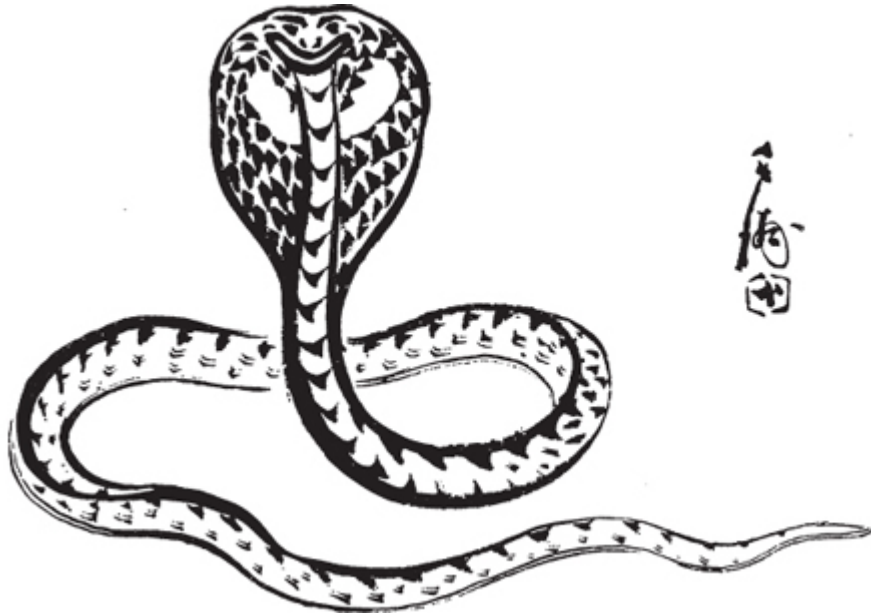
The legend pertaining to it states that the painter, when a child of twelve years of age, was sent to the school at the temple of Hōfukuji. His artistic predilections, however, led him to habitually neglect his religious duties. Hence one day, the abbot discovering him drawing when he should have been studying the *sūtra*, for punishment tied him by the hands to a tree. There he wept most profusely and then, seeing the ground moistened by his tears, he consoled himself by moulding it with his toes into the shapes of mice. So realistic were they, so charged with vitality, that they came to life, and in gratitude for their creation at once gnawed the cord which bound the boy and set him free. But when the priest arrived upon the scene, they scampered away, and so impressed with this miracle was the amazed bonze that, from that time on, the little Sesshū was permitted to follow the bent of his genius.

Interesting are the legends fabricated in the infancy of the race. When the nomadic life in the open kept the human mind close to nature—and the jewelled vault of heaven, the lofty heights of mountains, the flowery moor, and the yawning deep held the teeming life which flies and runs, crawls and swims—man found not only “tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones,” but an edification in the dumb creatures, which not only supplied him with his daily food and gave him a covering for his body, but administered to his spiritual needs.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE SERPENT

*Despised, abhorred, on earth yon crawl  
The dire foe of man and beast—  
Accursed as a thing apart  
From every living creature.  
Why thus condemned?  
What was thy crime  
That to a life of strife thee doomed?  
If true, that beauty marks the good,  
Thy myriad scales of lusted hues  
And changing rhythms of sinuous grace  
Bespeak for thee a spark divine.  
Forget thy wrongs of time untold  
And slough thy hatred with thy skin ;  
Dispel thy fears with heavenly love,  
Come forth renewed in radiant garb,  
And take thy place among God's own.*



From a drawing by Chiura

OF all creatures which have been associated with man's religious practices, the serpent is pre-eminent. From the most remote antiquity, this reptile—which so generally repulses and terrorizes both

man and beast—has singularly played one of the most important parts in the drama of human life.

In two distinctly different civilizations, one on the Western Hemisphere, and the other on the Eastern, it was the source of a culture that most profoundly influenced the spiritual growth of man. Beginning as the totem of savage tribes, it ultimately became an object of worship in almost every known part of the ancient inhabited world.

This worship, however, was limited to two varieties of serpents, the rattlesnake in the Americas, and the cobra in Asia, each being the emblem of the sun-god of their respective cults of sun and serpent worship.

The close relationship of the serpent to the sun has been a source of considerable speculation among symbologists. No creature was ever worshipped by primitive man unless it reflected attributes which were regarded as godlike and divine.

It is the belief that the serpent, the most inspirited of all creatures, was thought to possess the sun qualities of life, power, and immortality. For like the sun, which daily dies and is reborn through its setting and subsequent rising, the serpent, by shedding its skin at regular intervals, “casts its scaly vest and wreaths in the sun in youthful glory dressed,” and symbolizes not only death and resurrection, but life perpetually renewed and everlasting.

Then, again, its singular physique—having no limbs, yet ever able to propel itself with ease and swiftness, its power to coil and uncoil itself, to rear up on its tail and with suddenness attack an antagonist, all by some unaccountable inner force—the cunning it displays in battling with a foe; the deadly venom it generates to destroy him, together with its secretive habits of living in hidden haunts of the earth, have invested it with an air of mystery and exceptional supernatural power. For example, it is said not only to have a death-darting eye and a tongue of fire with which it can set forests ablaze, but to guard all the earth’s treasures. It likewise was believed to control the elements, causing rain or withholding it, for which reason it was held as sacred as fire and water.

The love of music, which lures it to captivity, as well as, in the case of the cobra, the power to inflate its hood, has endowed this particular species with mystic potentiality; while the subtlety of the tribe in general has led to its being chosen as one of the symbols of wisdom.

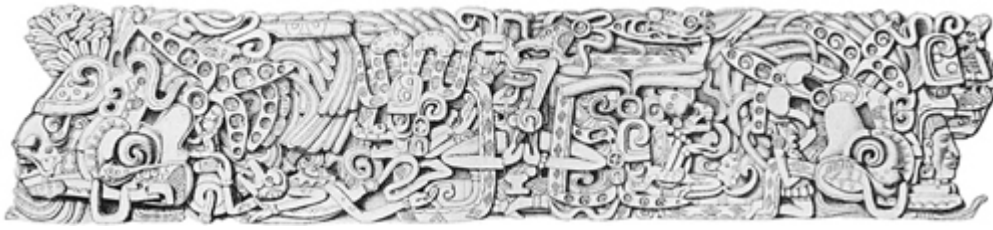


From a drawing by Francisco Cornejo. Toltec Feathered Serpents

Archæological remains from all parts of the world prove that sun and serpent worship, fully developed, existed long before the dawn of history. The similarity not only of these remains, but of the rites and rituals, as well as the social and religious customs shown by the ancient codices of Yucatan, Peru, Central America, and Mexico, and described in the ancient epics of India and related countries, prove unquestionably a common origin from some centre through the migration and inter-communication of peoples who claimed solar lineage. For generally where the rulers were said to be the descendants of a sun-god, there the serpent was held sacred.

In the Western world among the Mayas and their successors, the Toltecs, the Aztecs, the Muycas, and Peruvians, all of whom worshipped a sun-god, the feathered serpent is a common decorative motive, and is proven to have been among these peoples, as it was on the Eastern continent, the emblem of the sun.





From drawing by William Baake. A Mayan Feathered Serpent

The museum of the city of Mexico contains most interesting remains of the ancient arts of these people, who are thought to have antedated the historical periods of Asia. Here may be seen representations by the Aztecs of the benign Quetzalcoatl, regarded as the human representation of Tonacatlicoatl—also called Tezcatlipoca—the Supreme Deity and Great Father, who dwelt in the sun. Here are also many sculptured feathered serpents of rare beauty of design, wrought with a skill not only unknown in the arts of savagery, but comparable to anything that has ever been done by any of the world's greatest sculptors.

The accompanying illustrations include three representations of the feathered serpent. One is a drawing in extension of the decoration of an ancient sculptured bowl of the best period of Mayan workmanship, now in the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, New York. The remaining two drawings are by Francisco Cornejo, one reproducing two serpents of a bas-relief on a Toltec *cuauhxicallis*—a large cylindrical stone vessel used during the rites of human sacrifice to contain the blood of the unfortunate victim—and the other, the face of the great Aztec Calendar Stone. On this two feathered serpents form a border enclosing a very complex pattern in which there is a mask of the sun-god with a protruding tongue.



From a stone-carving. The Abhayagiri *Nāga*

In the Eastern Hemisphere, the earliest reference to sun and serpent worship is found in the VEDAS. Here conflicts are described between the Aryans and hostile bordering tribes of Scythia, generally referred to as the Serpas, Asurians, and Dasyas, all of whom later became known as the *Nāga*, “serpent,” races. These, it is held, were not only civilized peoples with cities and architecture, having mechanical skill and a knowledge of astronomy, but also expert navigators.



From a drawing by Francisco Cornejo. The Aztec Calendar

After a prolonged warfare, an alliance was formed between these serpent races and the, Aryans, and together they conducted a sea-borne commerce of early days.

The MAHĀBHĀHATĀ states that the ocean belonged to the *Nāga*, that it was their residence. This doubtless accounts for the numerous Asiatic legends, ranging from ancient India to modern Japan, relating to dragon kingdoms, dragon kings, and dragon palaces at the bottom of the sea.

The *Nāga* were thought to live on the sea, because of their habit of fleeing to their ships and disappearing when defeated in warfare.

The Hindu legend of “The Churning of the Ocean” or “The Sea of Milk,” in which the gods and demons used the serpent Vasūki as a rope to twirl the great tortoise-supported mountain, *Mandam*,

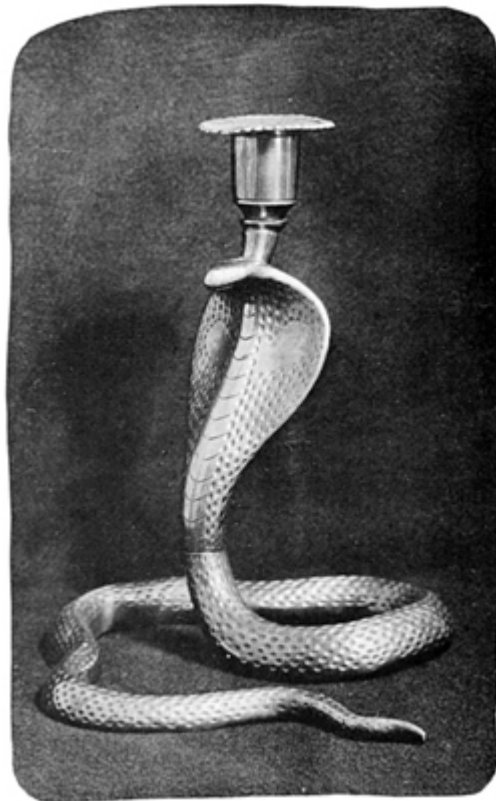
until it yielded up things of untold value, is but an allegory recording the activities of the serpent king, Vasūki, who, through navigating the great ship, *Mandara*, brought to India from distant lands the following treasure trove:

The *Amrita*, nectar of immortality; *Dhanvantari*, a physician; *Lakshmi*, the goddess of beauty and fortune; *Sura*, goddess of wine; *Chandra*, the moon; *Rarnbha*, a superb example of beautiful womanhood; *Uchichaih-sramis*, the greatest and most perfect of horses; *Kaustubha*, a wonderful jewel; *Pārijāta*, a tree yielding all desires; *Surabhi*, the cow of plenty; *Aimvata*, the most powerful of elephants; *Sankha*, the shell of victory; *Dhanus*, a famous bow; and *Visha*, a poison.

This legend refers to the warfare that originally existed between the gods and the demons, in which the former, being defeated, appealed to Vishnu for aid, and received the following reply:

“Your strength shall be restored, ye gods ;  
Only accomplish what I now command.  
Unite yourselves in perfect combination  
With these your foes; collect all plants and herbs  
Of diverse kinds from every quarter; cast them  
Into the Sea of Milk; take Mandara,  
The mountain, for a churning stick, and Vasūki,  
The serpent, for a rope; together churn  
The ocean to produce the beverage—  
Source of all strength and immortality.”

Vasūki, also known as Basuk Nāg, together with Sesha and Takshaka form the triad who reign over a portion of Pātāla—the lower regions—also called Nāga-loka, where the *Nāga* are supposed to dwell. Vasūki has many shrines, and all snakes are his servants. Therefore if a peasant sees one, he salutes it; and should the snake bite him, his family will erect a shrine on the spot in order to prevent others from being bitten.



From a Hindu brass candlestick. The Hooded Cobra

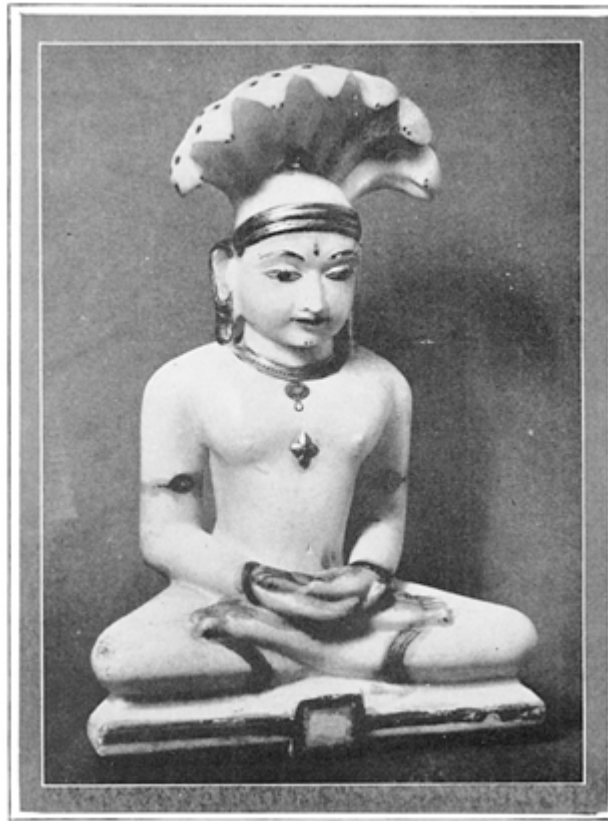
Vasūki's sister, Manasā, was regarded as the snake mother. She is quite familiarly known as Vishaharī, "The Destroyer of Poison." She was the wife of the sage Jaratkaru and was worshipped to invoke her protection against reptiles. She was, however, very revengeful, and would send the deadliest of reptiles to those who neglected her. An example of the visitation of her wrath is given in the following legend. A man by the name of Chandra not only refused to pay her honour, but actually publicly scoffed at her. As a result, three of his sons died of snake-bite, and a fourth, fearing a similar fate, confined himself in an iron house. But even this did not save him, for Manasā contrived to send a viper through a small crevice. After his death, his widow in company with all the neighbours made every effort to induce Chandra to propitiate the goddess. Even Manasā herself urged his friends to intercede with him so as to overcome his hostility towards her. Finally he yielded to their wishes, and threw a single flower with his left hand towards her image, and she was so delighted that she restored all his sons to life. This so impressed the people that her worship became general, and she was regarded as one of the great mothers.



From a drawing by Herbert J. Spinden. The Divine Serpent

That the Aryans became influenced by their relationship with the *Nāga* is shown in the coupling of their favourite deity, Vishnu, with a serpent, the great Sesha-nāga, which, according to one myth, shaped his huge body into a canopied couch to carry the deity over the waters of the deluge; or—

according to another version—so formed itself as to support and protect the god, while he contemplated the preservation of the creation, or slept during the intervals between worlds.



From a Jain statue. The *Ārya* Buddha.

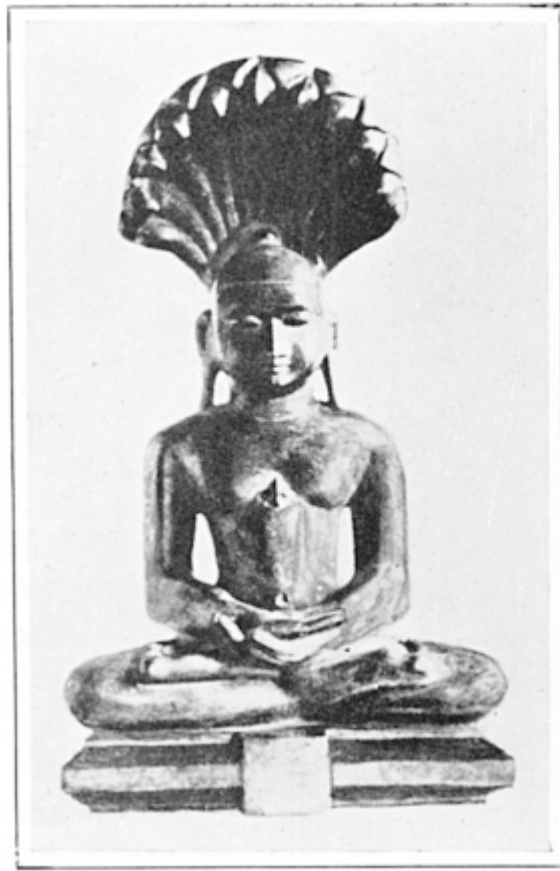
An accompanying illustration taken from the carved back of a couch shows Vishnu reclining on the back of Sesha-nāga and guarded by the latter's sevenheaded hood. Lakshmī, Vishnu's consort, sits beside him, while above, in a lotus which sprang from a god's body, reposes the fourheaded Brahmā, the Creator.



From a Hindu candlestick. A Useful *Nāga*

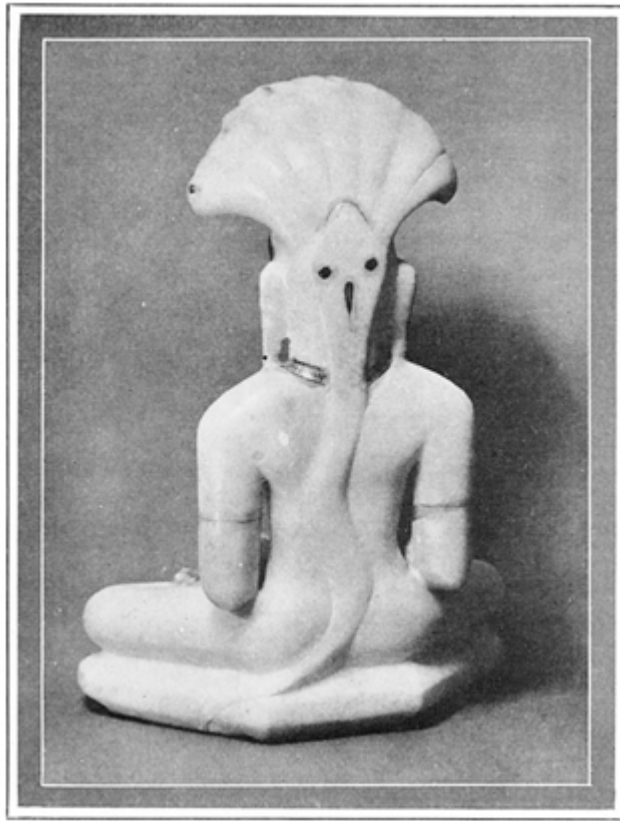
Sesha-nāga is regarded by some as an incarnation of Vishnu, and again, as a sun-god. As the latter, he is known as Ananta, “the Endless,” which encircles the earth in its vast coils. A representation of the latter frequently appears in the shape of a ring or as a serpent biting its tail, and symbolizes the sun’s orbit and eternity.





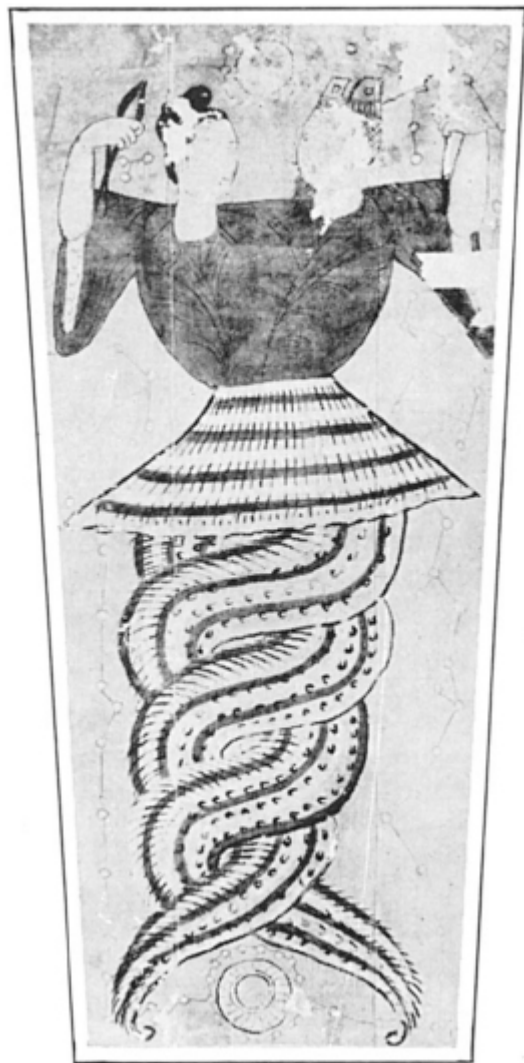
From an Indian statue. Buddha, Ninth *Avatār* of Vishnu

Later, Sūrya, the Sun-god, “The Vivifier and Quickener,” also succumbs to the serpent’s spell, and, henceforth, ever appears under the seven hooded-headed cobra canopy. Then, in due time, serpent gods and demi-gods are admitted into the Hindu pantheon, and official recognition is given to the *Nāga* by the Brāhmans, while the doctrine of Ophiolatry spreads in every direction. These demigods are generally deified living rulers and ancestors, which being regarded as the descendants of the sun-god become the *Nāga* of *Swarga*—Indra’s heaven of the epic poems. Appearing so constantly in Brāhmanical writings, where they represent atmospheric phenomena, they were propitiated before any other deities in time of drought or excessive rain. They are commonly referred to as *Nāgarāja*, and are generally represented as human beings with the protecting canopy of a cobra whose body grows from the human shoulders.



The *Ārya* Buddha. Rear View

The orthodox Brahmins, however, never accepted the *Nāga* and called them demons, particularly those which failed to accept the Hindu doctrines and still adhered to the religions and customs of their ancestors. Such were regarded as unregenerate and not only held in great contempt, but finally consigned to a separate snake world of the Brāhmanical hell, the *Pātāla*, before referred to—the very name of which was that of the principal city from which the serpent races originally came. These *Nāga* were said to be half-human and half-serpent since they were the offspring of the union of human and serpent tribes. The males are represented with a cobra-hooded canopy, having varying numbers of heads, while their wives, the *Nāginī*, are either devoid of this feature or possess one with a single head.



From a Korean fresco. Fu Hsi and His Consort Nü Kua

The half-human and half-serpent figure is common with all solar races. It is to be found in the arts of the ancient Americans, an example of which is given in the accompanying illustration of "The Divine Serpent." It appears in Greece, where the first king of Athens, Cecrops—who came from Egypt—was said to have been a similar hybrid. The same is said of Fu Hsi, the progenitor of China, and his consort Nü Kua, herewith shown in the inter-twined serpentine figures of the Korean fresco. Likewise, Benzaiten of the Hindus, and favourite deity of the Japanese, was of this form.



From an Indian statue. Buddha Protected by Muchilinda



From a Hindu decoration. A *Nāga* and *Nāginī*

And not only has the Scythian serpent become a dominant member of the Brāhmanic pantheon, but it has left its trail along the paths of Buddhism. For, according to the PURĀNA, Buddhism had its origin among the sun and serpent races. Both Brāhmanical and Buddhist authorities assert that Gautama was a descendant of the solar race of Iskshvahu, and that at the commencement of his ascetic life he was sheltered and protected by the *Nāgarāja* Muchilinda, an historic incident from which has arisen a myth later given in the Buddhist scriptures. This relates that once Gautama, while sitting in meditation, was harassed by the elements, when a friendly serpent—the tutelary deity of a lake near by—seeing the distress of the *muni*, came and, after wrapping its body around him seven times, spread its seven-hooded head over his sacred person. In this position the two remained for seven days and seven nights. For these seasons the Buddha is frequently represented with the overhanging, protecting cobra-canopy of the *Nāgarāja*. This is especially true of the Buddha when appearing as the Ninth *Avatār* of Vishnu—also known as Buddha, the liberator of the Naga and the *Ārya*, or coming Buddha of the Jains, both of which are herein illustrated. In the *Ārya* Buddha, the rear view of the statue is given in order to show the manner in which the serpent is attached to the human body. In esoteric India this placement symbolizes the Fire of *Kundilini*, the human creative energy which becomes transmuted into spiritual force after the attainment of illumination through meditation by an initiate. For then this serpent, which lies sleeping at the end of the spine, uncoils and creeps up the back of the ascetic until its inflated hood covers him. Hence it is said that he who has come into the fullness of light is rewarded with supreme vision and wisdom, and ever remains protected under the cobra-headed canopy.



From a Hindu painting. The Grateful *Nāginī*

All *Ārya* Buddhas have a four-pointed star on the breast and a human heart in the hands.





From a Hindu wood-carving. Vishnu Reclining on Sesha-nāga

It is known that throughout the entire life of Gautama he was on friendly terms with the *Nāga* people. This is amply shown by the sculptures of Amaravanta and Sanchi, where *Nāga* are represented in the very temples where Buddha is worshipped, and frequently a *Nāga*, accompanied by Buddhist symbols, is substituted for the master himself. This may be in illustration of a passage in the Buddhist Records which states: "Famine and disease prevailed so that all the roads were filled with the dead. Moved to pity, Buddha changed his form into that of a great serpent and called on the people on every side to look and be healed."



From a Hindu wood-carving. Krishna on Kālīya

The association of the *Nāga* with Buddha was conclusively proven when in 1878 some *stūpa* were opened which contained relics of the Sākya tribes—Gautama's own family—who were killed when Kapilavastu was destroyed. Here every relic was accompanied by an image of a *Nāga*, and one *stūpa* contained a golden *Nāga* which bore the name of Mahānāman, the prince who inherited Gautama's throne when he renounced the world.



From a Hindu painting. Krishna Quelling Kālīya

The character of the serpent varies according to the interpretation placed upon it by different nations. Some regarded it as divine, having talismanic and oracular power, for which they venerated and worshipped it, while others considered it a malignant being to be dreaded and propitiated

In Egypt, Isis as the ancient guardian of Ra, the sun-god, is represented as a serpent and, to accommodate himself to her, Osiris also takes the serpent form. They are thus shown in an ancient shrine. In Persia—which transmitted the philosophies of Babylon and Chaldea—the First Principles, those of Good and Evil, impersonated by the gods Ormuzd and Ahriman, were worshipped under the form of two serpents. These were generally represented standing on their tails struggling with their fangs for the possession of the mundane egg. This symbol of causation is again said to have been hatched by the divine serpent, signifying the sun.



From a Hindu painting. The Āsāvārī Rāginī

The Greeks, also, in their early Orphic hymns, speak of Kronos, Time, the First of all Things, as a serpent, from which sprang chaos, ether, and the mundane egg in the cloud, ultimately producing Pan.

The Copts also believed the serpent was the Generator of All Things. They received from it a sort of Logos or attendant of the Creator from the beginning of time. They had many festivals in its honour at the same solar periods when the Christians celebrate theirs. Its spring festival was called Oestre, from which sprang the later Easter.

The evil and demoniacal aspect of the serpent figures in the allegories of many nations, typical of which are Ormuzd and Ahriman of Persia, already referred to; Osiris and Typhon of Egypt; and Krishna and Kālīya of India—the latter being extensively fabled in both literature and art. According to the legend pertaining to it, a great polycephalous serpent dwelt in a whirlpool in the Jumna river, where he was shielded from the attacks of his mortal enemy, the *Garuda*. So venomous was this demon that the fumes from these waters devastated the adjoining lands and spread death among both men and beasts, whereupon Krishna, the eighth incarnation of Vishnu, determined to deliver his people from the ravages of this creature. He therefore fearlessly plunged into the stream. Kālīya at once wound himself about the youth, but he, undaunted, extricated himself and sprang upon the back of the serpent. Then, assuming the weight of the three worlds—while the *Nāga*'s wives, the *Nāginī*, were pleading for mercy for their lord—he danced back and forth on the great body, jumping from hood to hood, until Kālīya became submissive and prayed for forgiveness. Then Krishna—after celebrating his achievement on the back of his victim by calmly and peacefully playing his flute—extorted a promise of good behaviour from Kālīya and allowed him to assemble his wives and depart. Four different scenes of this event are shown in the accompanying illustrations, and particularly interesting is the one in which the wives of the *Nāga* make grateful offerings of lotus blossoms to the triumphant Krishna.



From a Hindu statue. The Submission of Kālīya

Here again is an allegorical record of the warfare between two peoples, the *Garuda* or bird tribes led by Krishna, and the *Nāga* or serpent tribes led by Kālīya, in which the bird tribes prevailed. There is a legend giving another version of this event relating to the two wives of Kāśuyapa. This states that Kudra, the mother of the serpent race, and Vinatā, the mother of the bird race, had a discussion regarding the tails of the horses of the sun. Vinatā insisted that they were white, but Kudra said they were black. They finally agreed that whichever one proved to be wrong should serve the other. Kudra then, to win the contest, contrived to fasten one of her black snakes to the back of one of the horses. This deceived Vinatā and led her to accept the defeat. Since then the snakes have ever ruled the birds.

Another deity conspicuous for his connection with the serpent is Mahā-deva, better known as Siva, the Destroyer, and second person of the Hindu triad. Both he and his consort Pārvatī are shown in some *avatār* with serpents entwined about their necks, waists, and limbs, as well as rising from their heads.

The Asāvarī *Rāginī*, of the accompanying illustration, represents a princess in the guise of a snakecharmer. She is seated under a sandal tree while two attendants are playing musical instruments. The serpents are coming from every direction, and as they become charmed with the melody they rise to considerable height, expand their hoods, thrust out their tongues, and sway back and forth as long as the music lasts.

Serpent worship, according to many authorities, still prevails in India, particularly along the Himalayas. It usually occurs in temples and before wayside shrines in thickly wooded groves. Here, offerings are made of milk and other food and some form of animal sacrifice is performed. In ancient times human sacrifice was the custom upon these occasions, until a monk offered himself as a substitute for the victim. Tradition relates, however, that instead of permitting the officiating priest to

take his life, he insisted he would await the deity to devour him. Then, after sitting in vain for many days, he explained that the *Nāga* was benevolent and did not wish men sacrificed. From that time the abomination ceased.

In the arts of India, the serpent—with the exception of the multiplication of its head—is ever the real animal literally portrayed, while in the ancient American arts it varies from sculptured images, quite life-like, to decorative abstractions so complex that they tax comprehension. Again, in the arts of China and Japan it has assumed an entirely different aspect; for the familiar dragon—as described in [Chapters I and II](#)—is entirely mythical, being a serpent which incorporates the parts of a number, of other animals. But Japan—ever sympathetic to all life and appreciative of the beauty of its forms—has, in addition to the dragon, also used snake motives in many of her arts.

Serpent worship appears constantly in history and legend, but it is to India that attention must be directed for the fullest information regarding it; for there its survival still retains most of its original characteristics. So general was it that Abul-Fazl says that, in his time, there were nearly seven thousand figures of snake-gods existing in Kashmir alone. In addition to this, the snake was one of the most common emblems of temples all over India, while at Bilaspur, in the central provinces, there is an ancient temple which has no other image but one of a cobra.

Of the many fête days held in honour of the reptile, that known as *Nāgapanchami*, or the *Gurui* festival, was the most prominent. At this festival models of the five-headed cobra, coiled in the shape of a cup made in terra-cotta, brass, and silver were filled with milk and used as an offering to the serpent deity that was worshipped. The women especially aimed to propitiate the serpent godling, Nāg the Deoto, while girls floated dolls on any near-by body of water, and the boys, in turn, beat these dolls with long switches which had been cut for the occasion.

The origin of this rite is attributed to the following legend:

The *rāja* Janamejaya held a *Sparta Sattra*, “snake rite,” especially to capture and destroy Takshaka, the king of serpents. But the latter, in the form of a mosquito, took refuge with Indra. Thither he was pursued by the *rāja*, who demanded that the wind-god banish him. Then Takshaka assumed the personality of a Brāhman lad and hid himself in the Caucasus. There he settled and married, but in an unguarded moment he foolishly related his story to his wife. She, so impressed by this unusual tale, could not resist the temptation of telling it to her friends. It was therefore not long before it reached the ears of Janamejaya, who lost no time in capturing Takshaka. This time he was sentenced to death, but before his execution, in revenge for his wife’s treachery, he demanded of the *rāja* that every man in his dominion put his own wife to death. This Janamejaya was unwilling to do, so he consulted the Brahmans and they advised him to prepare a fête at which every woman was to prove her obedience and devotion to her husband.

Another legend pertaining to the transformation of a human being into a serpent relates to a prince named Nahusha who, being borne in a litter through the air by a thousand *rishi*, in his pride ignoring the presence of Agastya-muni, accidentally struck him. Thereupon the offended sage caused him to be turned instantly into a serpent. Later, having atoned for his misconduct, through the intercession of Yudhishtira, he was forgiven and restored to his human form.

In India and Ceylon the serpent was the tutelary divinity of all cattle, their protector against poisonous reptiles that ever surround them. It was likewise a familiar member of the household, daily seen and regularly fed and invoked; and as the guardian of all the priceless treasures of the earth, it could confer gems upon its devotees.

Therefore, when in many districts of India the snakes became so numerous that the Government was obliged to resort to some measure for their extermination, there were very few who availed themselves of the liberal bounty offered for dead reptiles. For no Hindu was willing to bring down upon himself the consequences of killing a snake.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE SERPENT

(Continued)

### THE TOAD AND THE FROG

*The moving grass! Alas!  
I shall not go!*



From a painting by Chiura

THE serpent, or rather the snake—known to the Chinese as *shê* and to the Japanese as *hebi*—was, according to the oriental zodiac, a creature entirely distinct from the dragon. For in the duodenary cycle referred to in [Chapter III](#) they not only represent different signs but symbolize antipodal qualities and characteristics—the dragon typifying the positive, benevolent, and constructive forces of the universe, and the snake those which are negative, malevolent, and destructive. Hence the snake was not only used as an emblem of deceit and cunning, but was classified with four other creatures—the tiger, a kind of lizard, the centipede, and the fabulous three-legged toad—to represent the Five Poisons.

The Chinese believe that the poison, mental as well as physical, disseminated by the snake, is responsible for all of human ills, and following the theory that like cures like, they use it as a medicinal remedy for most maladies.

The most efficacious of such drugs was derived from the gall of a snake known as the *tan shê*. This creature, according to the ancient work, *LINGPIAO LU YÜ CHI*, “Unusual Things Beyond the Li Mountains,” possesses a gall which is credited with remarkable healing powers.

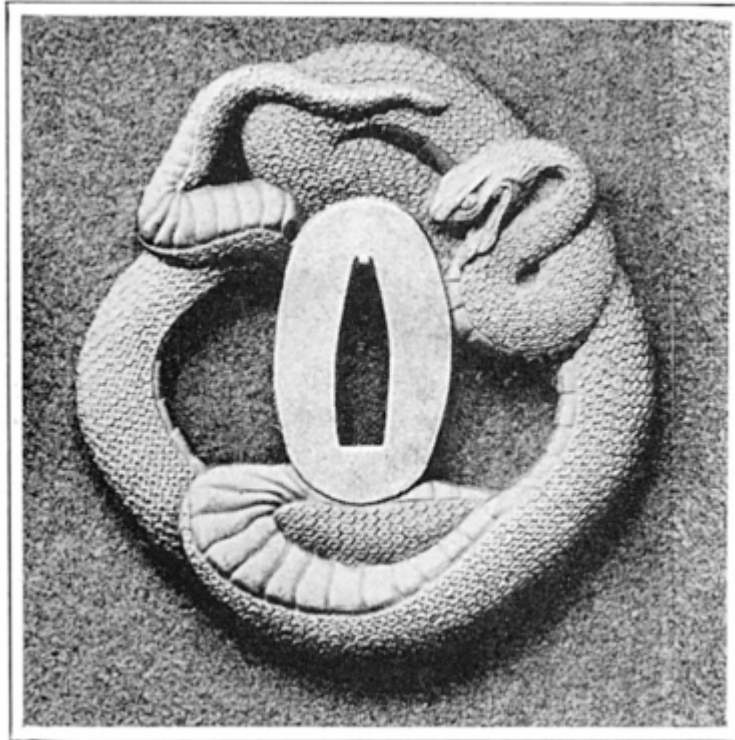
In Canton there is a place called *P’u An Chon*, where yearly, on the fifth day of the fifth month, the fearsome *tan shê*, in considerable numbers, are brought to the magistrate by professional snakecatchers and snake-breeders. Each reptile is placed on a soft mattress and held down by as many



as ten men, while a skilled surgeon opens its body, removes a portion of its gall and then sews up the incision. This gall is regarded as the only remedy for mortal infectious fever, for which reason it is paid as a tribute to the Imperial Palace.

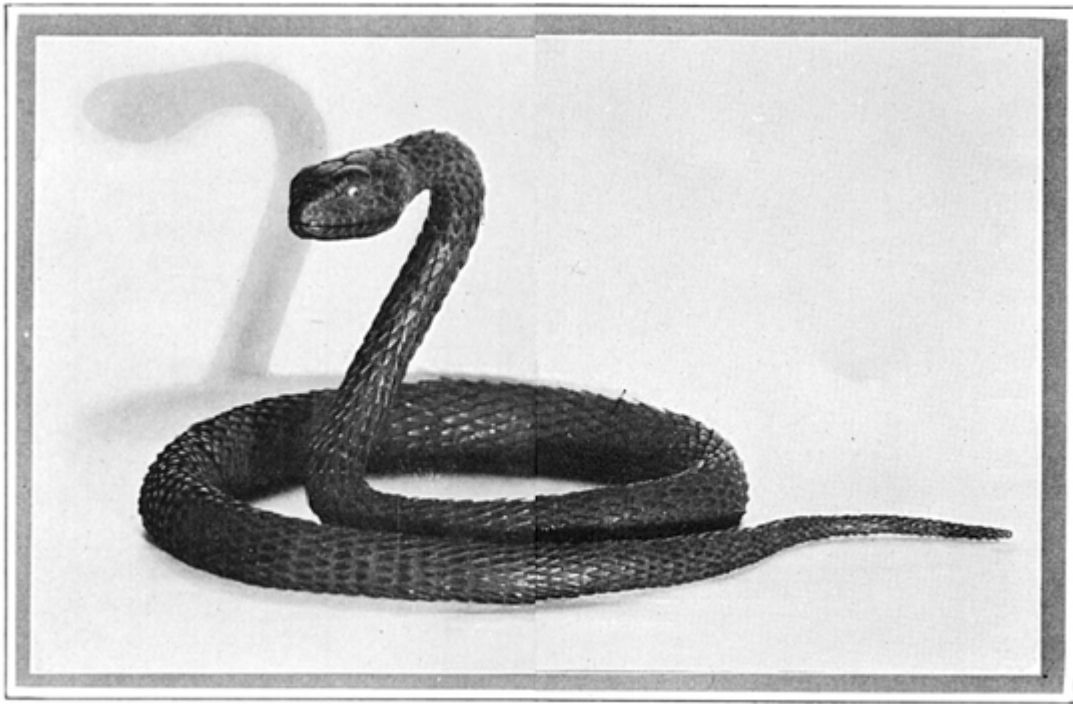
Another snake known as the *chin shê*, “golden serpent,” is said to have amber-coloured scales which are likewise a potent antidote for poison.

The following extract, taken from a work by Liu Tsung Yüan of the T’ang dynasty, sheds considerable light upon this subject: “In the wilderness of Yüan Chou there is a wonderful snake. It has a black body with white spots and exudes poisonous fluids. In its wake it blights all growing things and destroys all life. But it can be caught, and if its body is properly dried, it becomes a remedy for many ills otherwise regarded as fatal. The Imperial physician has offered a remittance of all taxes to those who will send to him annually two of these reptiles.”



From a bronze sword-guard

For three generations the Chiang family have been supplying these snakes, notwithstanding the fact that many of its members have lost their lives in the pursuit. One day one of them was asked why he continued in so dangerous an occupation. To this he replied: “My people have lived in this village with two hundred other families; and, while of my grandfather’s generation there is but one survivor, and of my father’s generation but three, still I am content, for although my work is hazardous, it occurs but twice a year. And the other inhabitants are constantly harassed by the continued demands of the tax-collector. Should I lose my life through a deadly reptile this year or next, I, at least, have had many more peaceful days than any of my neighbours. Confucius says that bad government is worse than tigers, but I have proven that it is worse than poisonous snakes.”



From a bronze jointed serpent

Another deadly reptile, known as the *pa shê*, has been described in a poem by Yüan Chên of the T'ang dynasty, as follows:

There are hundreds of poisonous snakes,  
But the *pa shê* is the most fatal ;  
Its skin, patterned with white spots,  
Resembles a beautiful coat.  
It pursues man with lightning speed,  
Spitting its deadly venom ;  
And with its hypnotic power  
It draws animals toward it  
As with a magnet.



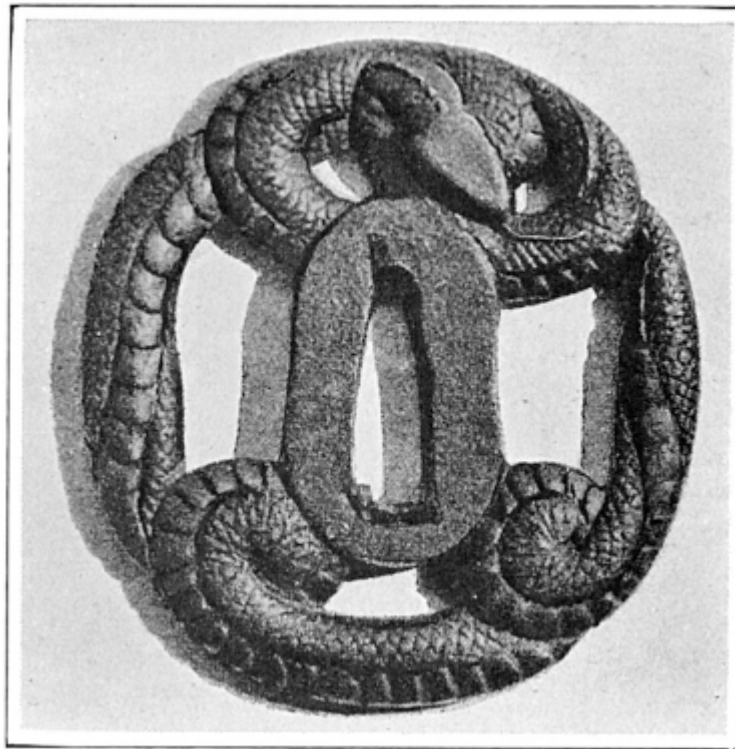
From a bronze image of a votive offering. Serpent and Pine Tree

An interesting legend, illustrating the effects of human beliefs, is given in the official history of the Chin dynasty. In this, it is related that a relative of Yüeh Chuang, while visiting him, thought he had swallowed a small snake which he remembered seeing in his wine-cup. During the three years which followed he was very ill and attributed his condition to the incident. Later he revisited Yüeh Chuang, and again drinking from the same cup, beheld a similar snake. This time, however, he stopped to examine it and discovered that what he had thought was a small reptile, was nothing more than the reflection, in the bowl, of a painting on the ceiling, and from that moment his sickness left him.



From a painting by Chiharu. Seeing The *Genjōraku*, “Snake Dance”

The snake is not only credited with being responsible for all diseases, but is believed to have the power of metamorphosis, through which it produces droughts and floods. The following legend—frequently found represented in the graphic and glyptic arts—known as the *Pai Hsieh Chuan*, “The White Snake Narrative,” illustrates this belief. It relates that a Buddhist monk by the name of Fahi, while engaged in meditation at a temple on the banks of Shê Hu, “West Lake”—located in the vicinity of the city of Hanchow—became conscious of the fumes of vitiating vapour which permeated his cell. Seeking the cause of this unusual phenomenon, he was led to a drug store near by, where he found two women, whom—through his spiritual power of discernment—he recognized as virulent snakes of an age exceeding a thousand years, and possessing exceptional magical power. In one, which impersonated the wife of the druggist, he detected a *pai shê*, “white snake,” and in the other, which impersonated her maid, a *chin shê*, “green snake.”



From a bronze sword-guard

Realizing the close relationship between snakes of this character and floods, he feared these two creatures might bring disaster to the people of that locality. Hence he felt it his duty to catch them and place them where they could do no harm. But the snakes were extraordinarily wise, and divining his purpose summoned to their aid their allies from the under-world. This, in turn, caused the priest to call for help from the spiritual forces, and in the battle which ensued, the demon hordes were overcome and the women captured. The priest then transformed them into their real selves and placed them in a dungeon under a tower—which has become known as the Fahi tower—where tradition relates they still remain.

In the representations of this myth, the two snakes in human form, but garbed in snake skins and accompanied by their sinister accomplices, are shown in the lake contending with the priestly company stationed on the shore, beyond which, in the background, looms the Fahi tower.

Women have in all ages and countries, for some unaccountable reason, been associated with serpents. Even the gentle Sâkyamuni is reported to have compared women with the five kinds of dangerous snakes—the angry, the spiteful, the hateful, the ungrateful, and the venomous. He claimed that the life of woman was ever in darkness, and asserted that while his manifold incarnations included every state of existence, even that of a serpent—the form of which he had assumed four times—he had never descended to the depths of womanhood.



From a bronze temple-picture by Tomonobu in wooden frame by Tōkōsai

Concerning the true nature of the white snake, there are several versions. One asserts it to be a princess labouring under enchantment; another claims it to be a woman condemned to pass a thousand years in this form in penance for sins she committed; while still another holds it to be a manifestation of the great potential dragon bent upon some spiritual mission. Of the latter, which was regarded as divine, Fu Huan of the Chin dynasty wrote:

The potency of the divine serpent is beyond comprehension. It can fly in the sky without wings; it can swim in the sea without fins; it can walk on the earth without feet. It dwells in the air, in happiness and self-sufficiency. In due time it evolves a flaming pearl, whereupon it becomes transformed into a dragon.

In Japan there are many evidences of early sun and serpent worship. The legend of Amaterasu—the sun-goddess, who hid herself in a cave, leaving the world in darkness until lured forth by her jealousy of another woman who was receiving the admiration of the assembled gods—is a relic of primitive sun worship.





From a Japanese painting of the Kamakura period. Benzai-ten of the Marvellous Voice

Again, the numerous small temples and shrines distributed all over the Empire—where snakes still are worshipped—testify to the survival of the cult. In most instances these have been erected to propitiate some reptile which had been killed and buried in that very spot after having wrought havoc and death in the surrounding country.



From a Japanese painting by Tanyū.

The temple at Enoshima is an offering of this nature dedicated to the goddess Benzaiten, because she subdued the serpent or dragon which devastated the village of Koshigoye of all its children. Concerning this episode it is related that the people in their distress prayed to this deity for relief, and, in response, there followed a violent earthquake directly over the watery lair of the monster. From that very spot arose a beautiful island bearing aloft on a rocky eminence the goddess silhouetted against the red disc of the sun; and so great was her radiance that she outshone the luminary. The people knew that their prayers had been answered, and not only had the dragon been sent away, but the goddess had bestowed upon them this beautiful island which they named Enoshima, "The Island of the Bay." Since that eventful occurrence, Benzai-ten has been an object of special worship, not only at this place but also on the islands of Chikubu-shima in Lake Biwa, and Itsuku-shima, now known as Miyajima, in the Inland Sea. To these shrines the women of Japan make pilgrimages in the month of July and there supplicate the deity for all feminine attractions and virtues, including physical beauty, charming manners, a melodious voice, and a noble character.



From a Chinese painting by Mu Ch'i. *Arhat with Serpent in Meditation*

In the present day, however, the most ardent prayers beseech her for wealth; for it has been discovered that her name may be so written as to signify “The goddess who governs and distributes riches.”

Benzai-ten, the religious deity, appears to have a counterpart in a secular deity known as Benten—who is a conspicuous member of the *Shichi-fukujin*, “Seven Gods of Happiness.” Whether Benten is a distinct personality or her name a mere abbreviation of Benzai-ten, can only be determined from the graphic arts, since there is no native literature on the subject. But whether this deity is referred to as Benzai-ten, Dai Benzai-ten, or Benten, she is always regarded as the goddess of beauty, love, and talents, and the particular diva of music.

In ancient art—as shown in the accompanying illustration of a painting of the Kamakura period—she is represented as a deity of a Chinese type with a halo, and seated on a rock, playing a *biwa*, “lute,” while a dragon disports itself at her feet. In later works, particularly of the Ukiyo-ye school, she retains her special attribute, but is shown as a mere Japanese maiden, wearing a tiara which sometimes consists of a *hō-ō* nestling among peonies, or a head-band of flame-like ornaments supporting a miniature *tori-i*, “a Shintō gate,” beneath which coils a white snake with human head.



From a Japanese painting by Sesshūn. Kannon of the Dragon

The genesis of Benzai-ten may be attributed to another of the inventions of priestcraft so common to Japanese mythology; or she may be a Japanese interpretation of the Hindu goddess Sarasvatī, who not only was the *śakti*, “female energy,” of Brahmā, the Creator, but likewise a water deity; being the personification of the river from which she derived her name. As the all-productive, all-powerful, all-wise consort of Brahmā, she was the tutelary genius of the creative arts and the goddess of harmony, for which reason she ever carries a *vina*, “lute,” resembling the Japanese *biwa*. As a water deity, in all probability she assumed the form of a *Nāginī*—described in the preceding chapter—with a body half human and half serpent. In this form the early painters delighted to portray her, as may be seen in a notable example in the British Museum entitled “Jashin no Benten.” Her connection with prehistoric serpent worship is proven at the Engakuji temple at Kamakura, where a shrine is dedicated to a local *Nāga* who is worshipped under the name of Benzai-ten. The image of this deity—as shown in the accompanying illustration—is taken from a *mamori*, “printed charm,” procured at the temple.



From a Japanese painting by Yeisen. Fudō Myō-ō Appearing to the Youthful Chō Densu

The bronze *gaka*, “framed picture,” by Tomonobu herewith shown, is from the temple of Enoshima, where the snake is regarded as the emblem of Benzai-ten. This, as well as the bronze image of a serpent entwining a rock under a pine tree, also given in an illustration, belongs to a class of votive offerings donated by artists in order that they may acquire merit to protect them against serpents.

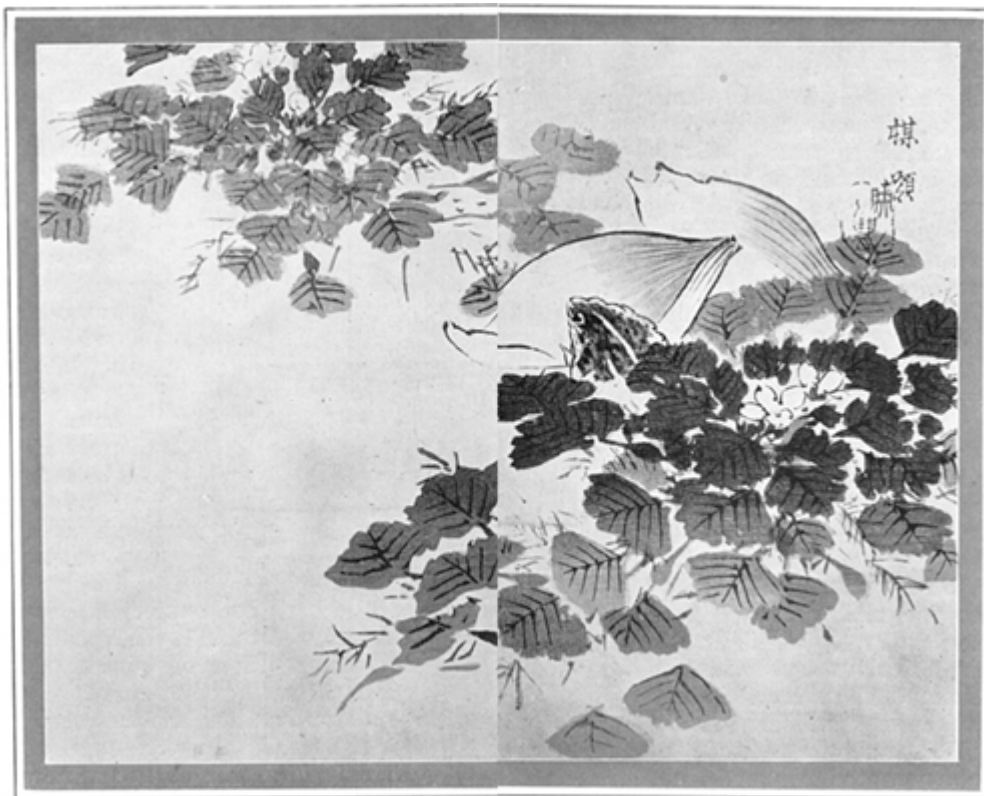
A deity easily confused with Benzai-ten is Kwannon (Ch. Kuan-yin). She is identified with the Hindu divinity Avalokitesvara, “the looking down sovereign.” In Japan she is revered as the white-robed goddess of mercy, who is quoted as having exclaimed, “Where even a gnat cries, there am I!”

The resemblance between these two goddesses consists in their both having been, in some manifestations, water deities. For Kwannon, like Benzai-ten, is represented sitting on a rock by the sea, as in the *Anoka* Kwannon, or reposing on a lotus petal floating on the waters, as in the *Benge no* Kwannon, “Kwannon of the Lotus,” painted by Kanō Tanyū. She is likewise associated with the dragon, as in the *Ryūzu*, “Dragon Kwannon,” herewith given in the beautiful composition signed Sesshū, a woman painter of the Kanō school.



From a coloured woodcut by Kōchō. A Group of Immortals

Another survival of ancient serpent worship in Japan is to be found in an old dance known as the *Genjōraku*, “Snake-Seeing Dance,” shown in the painting by Chiharu. In this, a single performer dances about a coiled wooden snake, which he grasps and drops again. This dance, it is said, was invented to burlesque the ignoble flesh-eating propensities of the Western barbarians who were believed to eat even snakes.





The snake figures quite extensively as a symbolic ornament for the gods of the debased Mahā-Tantra system of Tibetan Buddhism, where, in connection with human skulls, it is used for girdles, armlets, wristlets, anklets, and head-dresses, to symbolize the eternal revolution of ages and the succession, dissolution, and regeneration of mankind.

It is rarely found in this form in China and Japan, the painting by Yeisen, herewith shown, of Fudō Myō-ō—who wears it as a girdle—being a rare exception. This illustration has an additional interest in that it portrays the tradition of a well-known incident in the life of the great painter Chō Densu, who is said to have received all the powers of his great genius through the appearance of this god of wisdom to him when but a child of seven years of age.



From a Japanese painting by Chō Densu. Gama *Sennin*

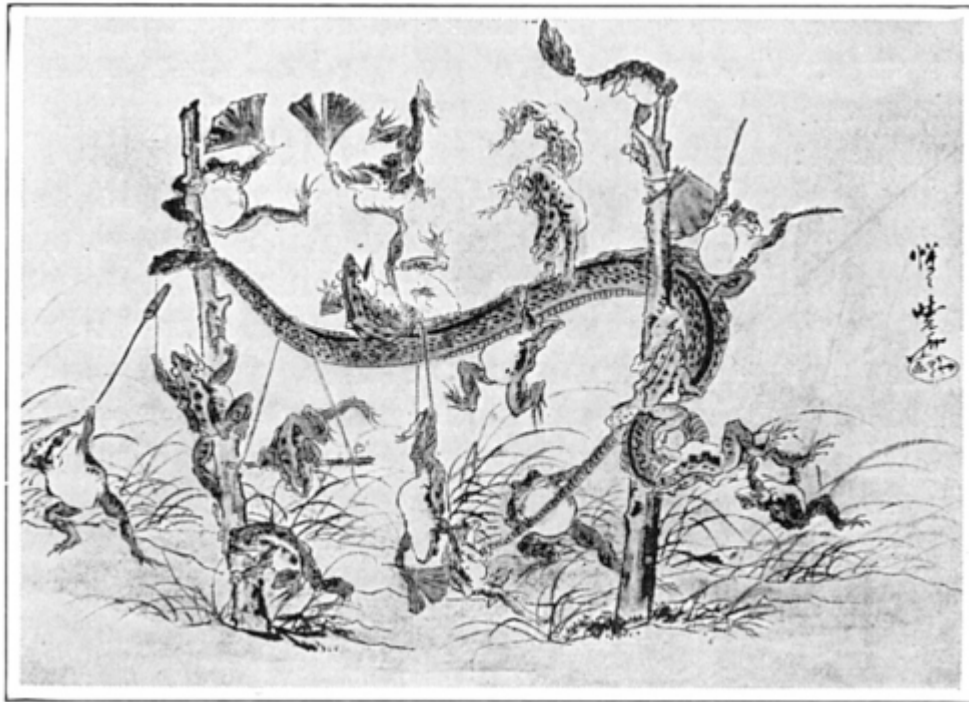
Another reptile of mythical characteristics, which plays an important part in oriental art and folklore, is a creature which the Chinese designate as a *ha ma* and the Japanese as a *gama*, but which occidental writers refer to first as a toad and then as a frog. Here again, in the absence of definite information, it is necessary, for the decision of the question, to have recourse to graphic representations.

Its earliest portrayal—found in China in the bas-reliefs of shrines of the Han dynasty, where it represents the markings of the face of the moon—unquestionably represents a toad.



From a Chinese woodcut. The Immortal Toad

Its being in the moon is accounted for by the following legend: Hou I, the Lord of Archery, at the command of the Emperor Yao shot arrows into the air, and thus through his skill delivered the lunar orb when it was pursued through the clouds by the Ten Suns, that is, during an eclipse. In gratitude for this service, the royal queen of heaven, Hsi Wang Mu, gave him a cup of jade filled with the dew of immortality. Thereupon his wife, Ch'ang-o, fully cognizant of the potency of this elixir of life, seized it and fled to the moon. But she had not reckoned with the powers that be, for she instantly was transformed into a toad and sentenced to remain there for ever. She is known as Ch'an Ch'u, the sacred toad of longevity, which tradition describes as large, pure white, and three-legged, with a *ling chih*—the fungus of longevity, regarded as the “branch of the soul”—growing from its head, as delineated in the Chinese woodcut entitled “The Immortal Toad.”



From a Japanese painting by Kyōsai. Turning the Tables

The Hindus, likewise, claim that the regent of the moon—known as Chandra or Soma—is symbolized by a toad; while, again, *Ketu*, the malefic planet of the descending node, is sometimes represented as a toad carrying a human head on its back.



From a printed temple *mamori*, A Japanese *Nāga*

Although the toad and the frog belong to the same genus, they differ in the species in certain anatomical characteristics and habits. The typical toad is terrestrial, except during the breeding season, when it seeks the water. The frog is to a greater extent aquatic. They both have short, squat bodies. The toad is covered with a rough, warty skin which secretes an acrid fluid, but the skin of the frog is smooth. The toad has comparatively weak hind legs, while those of the frog are strong. In addition to this, the latter has webbed feet, enabling it to leap with greater agility and swim more rapidly than its kin. The toad is regarded as characteristically reptilian and therefore endowed with sinister qualities. It has the reputation of breathing forth poisonous vapours which are destructive to all life that comes within its range, and of sucking into its open mouth all small creatures from a distance as great as ten feet. Belonging to the nocturnal tribes, it is also invested with the mystery of night life, for it is during the darkness that it preys upon insects, worms and slugs for food. For these reasons it is believed to possess exceptional powers to perform many kinds of magic, in consequence of which it is represented in the graphic arts as exhaling a vapour which expands as it rises and discloses most alluring pictures. These frequently include the moon palaces of Ch'an Ch'u.



From a coloured woodcut by Shigemasa. Ono no Tōfū

Of its malefic activities, such tales as the following are commonly told: "In ancient times there was a three-legged toad, living in a deep pool, that habitually exhaled poisons that were fatal to the people living in its vicinity. So great was the number of deaths, that Liu Hê, a genii, decided to destroy it. But it was so wise that it kept in hiding and nothing could lure it forth until a fairy dangled a gold coin at the end of a fish-hook. This proved to be its undoing, for with almost human covetousness it sprang at the glittering bauble and met its doom on the hook." This legend is said to have given rise to the proverb, "The glitter of gold lures men to destruction."

There is also a tradition of its association with witches, who are believed to use its fat to make an ointment which enables them to fly through the air.

The toad is the attribute of the Taoist *rishi*, Hou Hsien-hsing (Jap. Gama *Sennin*, also called *Kōsensei*), who was identified with a mysterious drug-seller with a singular batrachian countenance.

He is generally represented as a poorly-clad man with flat, commonplace features, who is accompanied by a white-skinned toad which exhales the usual vapours enclosing some form of mirage. It is claimed that the *rishi* was once seen assuming the form of a toad while bathing.

In the accompanying illustration of a Japanese painting by Ch5 Densu, Gama *Sennin* holds on his left shoulder the fabulous toad which, as usual, exhales a stream of vapour eddying upward toward the moon. In some renditions of the subject this column widens and reveals the lunar palaces.

In another illustration from a coloured woodcut by Kōchō, entitled “A Group of Immortals,” Gama *Sennin* occupies a position in the foreground playing with his toad. The other members of the group are Kanzan (Ch. Han Shan), with a rock; Oshikyō (Ch. Wang Tzū-chiao), with a crane; Taishin U Fujin (Ch. Tai Chên Wang Fujên), with a dragon; Tekkai (Ch. Li T’ieh-kuai), despatching his spirit to the mountain of the immortals; Rōshi (Ch. Lao Tzū), with a staff; Tōbōsaku (Ch. T’ung Fang-so), with a peach; and Kanshoshi (Ch. Han Hsiang-tsū), with a flute.

The Hindus also have a similar toad relationship. They believe Mandodari, the wife of Rāvanna, so conspicuous in the RĀMĀYANA epic, is an incarnation of the reptile.

The frog, quite in contrast with the toad, is regarded as clean, wholesome, and innocent of evil.

In India, the Vedic poet, Vasishtha, invokes the frogs as deities and compares their croaking to the chanting of the Brahmins who are performing sacrificial rites and praying to the cloud-compelling Parjanya for rain in the time of drought. They are entreated to refresh, and, therefore, renew the earth.

In Greece the frog also figures in myth, for it is related that Agni, the fire-god, took refuge in the water to escape the wrath of his enemies. He, however, generated so much heat, causing such great suffering among the frogs, that they made his presence known. Thereupon the angry Agni cursed them so that their speech henceforth should be inarticulate.

In art the frog is seldom seen except in picturesque combinations with aquatic plants. In the modern schools of Japanese painting it is combined with the most sacred flower of Buddhism, as shown in the given illustration of a painting by Bairei entitled “Seeking a Lotus Throne.”

But not only have its picturesque characteristics invited interest, but its intelligence as well, hence the charming conceits of Kyōsai’s brush, through which, in caricature, the little creature becomes the object of many an amusing incident. “Turning the Tables” is not only an expressive characterization of the mischievous little croakers, but a very pleasing composition.

The most popular legend relating to a frog—so beautifully represented in the woodcut by Shigemasa—is that of Ono no Tōfū, an official of the tenth century, who was indebted to this small creature for the success of his career. He had become discouraged through his repeated failures to pass his examinations, but learned a lesson of patience and perseverance by idly watching a frog which, even after seven unsuccessful attempts, repeated the effort, and finally secured the coveted willow leaf hanging above him.

An allegory in which the snake, toad, and slug are connected is known as the *San Sukumi*, “The Three Cringing Ones.” This unquestionably is designed to teach the lesson of the interdependence of creatures and their individual powers over each other. For, while a snake can swallow a toad, the toad in turn can swallow a slug, but this apparently defenceless thing can destroy the snake by covering it with its slimy excretion.

An adaptation of this allegory may be found in the legend of Jiraiya, who slew the great serpent Orochimaru. Jiraiya was the nickname of Ogata Shume, the son of a chieftain in Kyūshū. In his youth, on account of his notorious escapades, he was called *Wakai*, “Young Thunderer.” Very early in life he joined a band of robbers, finally becoming their chief. The particular episode of this legend relates to an attempted robbery from which he was diverted by a storm, and was obliged to take refuge in the hut of an old woman. Obsessed with the desire to rob and murder, he attempted to kill his hostess while she slept; but just as he was about to raise his sword, she suddenly awoke, assumed the form of a man, seized his weapon and held him at bay, suing for mercy.

This strange being proved to be Sensō Dōjin, the Toad Spirit, who was endowed, not only with all the supernatural powers of the reptile, but with a spirit of beneficence as well. For, instead of avenging the treachery of his guest, he forgave the offence and taught him the secrets of toad magic.

The latter, however, was conditional, for he had to promise to use this power exclusively for the benefit of humanity. Therefore, from this time Jiraiya devoted himself to good deeds mainly, yet never entirely forgetful of his own interests. He was much gratified to possess this power, still he realized that it was not supreme, but inferior to that of the serpent spirit. Dame Fortune, however, again favoured him by enabling him to meet a young girl who had been instructed in snail magic. He married her and by their combined powers he felt equal to any adversary. Finally, in the war between the Tsukikage and Inukaga clans, with his knowledge of toad magic and his wife's understanding of snail magic, he led successfully the Tsukikage forces to victory, notwithstanding that the Inukaga army was fighting under the command of the powerful serpent magician, Orochimaru. For this successful venture he was rewarded by being made the Lord of Iclzu, and was, in consequence, able to spend the remainder of his life in the pursuit of congenial occupations.



## CHAPTER XXIV

### SEA-FLOOR LIFE

*The mighty ocean sways between heaven and earth,  
The sun and moon rise and set at its shores ;  
Within it, myriads of creatures dwell in peace  
Until storm-tossed by furious winds,  
Then the poor lobster is left helpless on the sands.  
Why—if the carp can transform into a dragon—  
Cannot the lobster grow wings and fly to heaven?*

From the Chinese.



From a painting by Chiura

THE arts of the Orient eloquently express the dominant principle of the philosophy of the Far East—the unity of all life, so manifest in the truth and beauty of its myriad forms. Every creature from the noblest of the four-footed beasts to the lowliest creeping and crawling thing is not only deemed worthy of thought, but regarded as a younger brother. Each but expresses a stage and state of the unfoldment of spiritual consciousness through which the monad passes in the evolutionary progress of becoming human, and in turn is prophetic of man's ultimate potential divinity. Hence the sages of old found in each sentient, as well as in each impercipient thing, not only a reflection of the universal spirit, but of human qualities which became a means of edification and enlightenment. Realizing with Emerson that "A good symbol is a missionary to convince thousands," they not only used these creatures to express the abstractions which constituted the tenets of their doctrines, but with equal wisdom incorporated them into the decorative arts, where, being ever in evidence, they became a

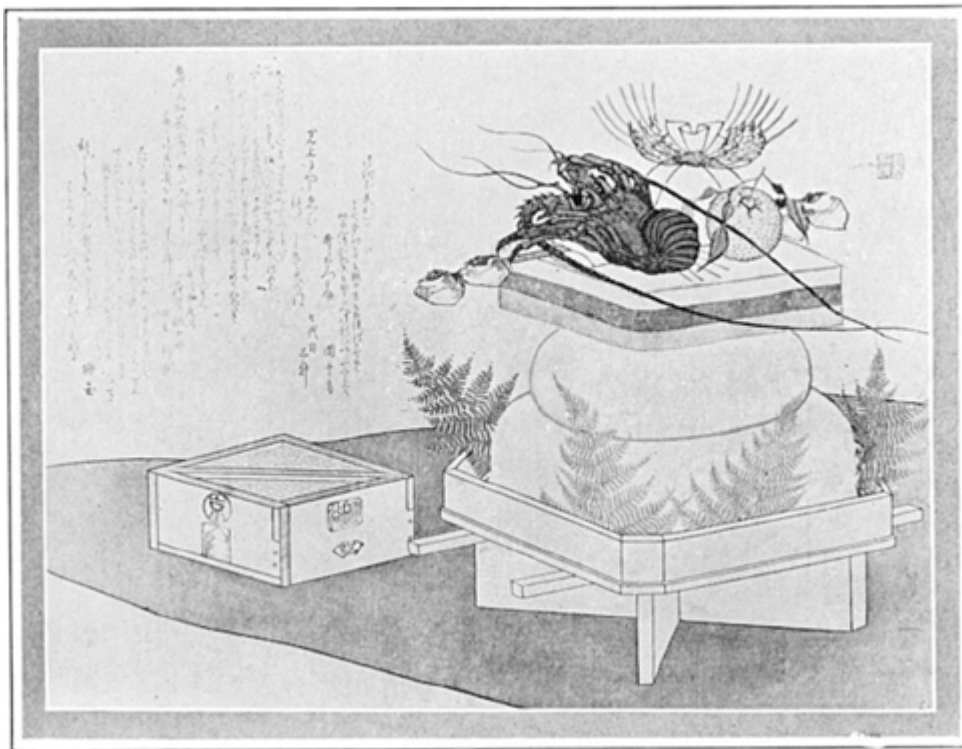
subtle but potent factor of moral training. It is, therefore, not surprising that such inconsequential forms of life as crustaceans and molluscs should be found among the decorative motives.

The lobster in the Orient is a spiny creature, a crayfish, which lacks the large chelæ or pincer claws of the American variety, but has instead antennæ of exceptional size and strength. It is rarely seen in the arts of China, although many references to it occur in the literature of the country, where it is known as the *lung hsia*, “dragon shrimp.”

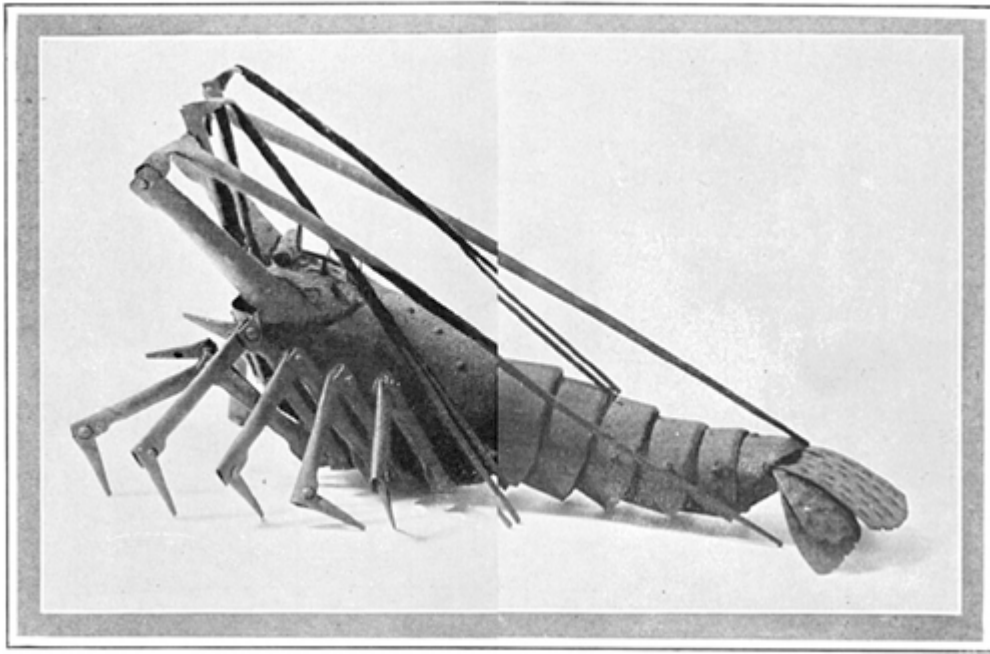
Regarding its symbolism, both literature and tradition are silent. Yet, since in many of the arts, Hsiang Tzū—one of the Taoist immortals—is depicted using it as a craft, it must have some significance, for with the Chinese a decorative motive is ever intended to convey an idea.

In Japan, known by the name of *ebi*, it is not only a popular art motive, but a symbol of longevity commonly used in connection with happy events, when it is combined with the written character for the word *manzai*, “congratulation”—a curtailed form of *senjū banzai*, “ten thousand years.” It is most conspicuous among the New Year decorations, where it adds a most beautiful note of red to the articles placed upon the household shrine—the *kami-dana* or “shelf of the gods.”

The two illustrations entitled “New Year Offerings” representing *surimono*, “ceremonial cards,” of very large size by unknown designers, display the *ebi* quite prominently. Again in the smaller *surimono* by Toyohiro entitled “The *Ebi Takarabune*,” this symbol of longevity is made to serve as the hull of the treasure ship which on New Year’s Eve is said to convey the *Shichi-fukujin*, “Seven Gods of Happiness,” and the cargo of *takara-mono*, “honourable treasures,” into port. In this design, however, the little ship is bringing only the symbols, the gods for some unaccountable reason having been left behind. Very frequently New Year *surimono* which include this lobster motive bear the inscription :



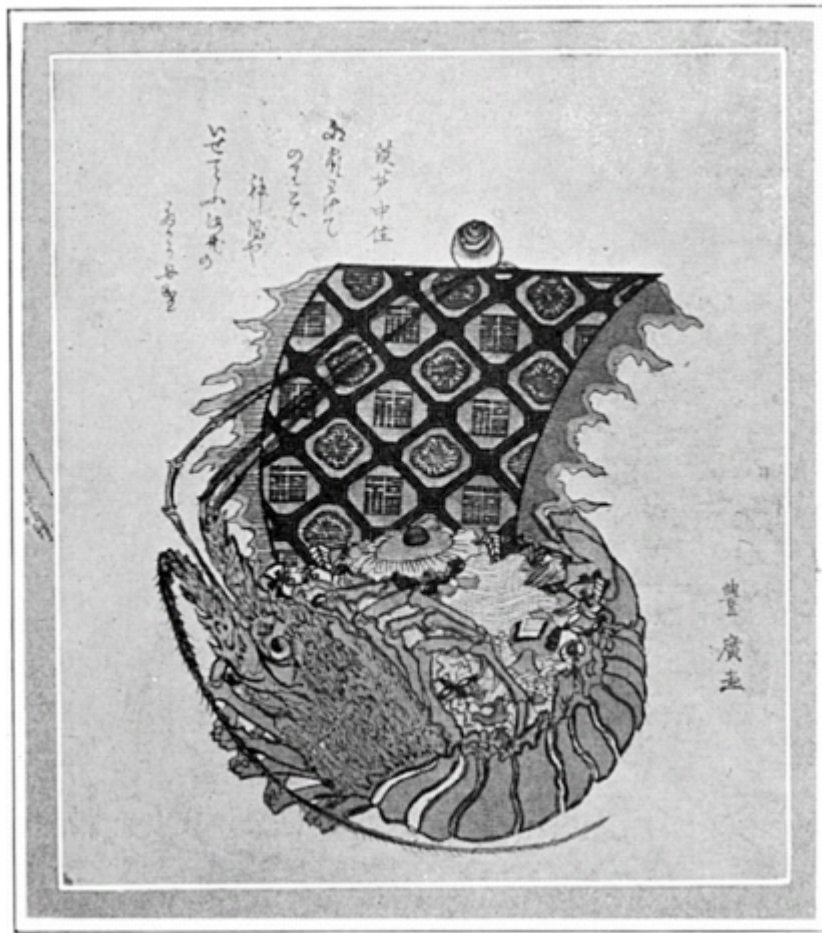
From a *surimono*. New Year Offerings



From a bronze jointed figure

May you live until your back humps like the lobster,  
but on this print the poem above the sail reads :

The wind of the gods is breaking the morning fog and bringing in the *takaramono*.

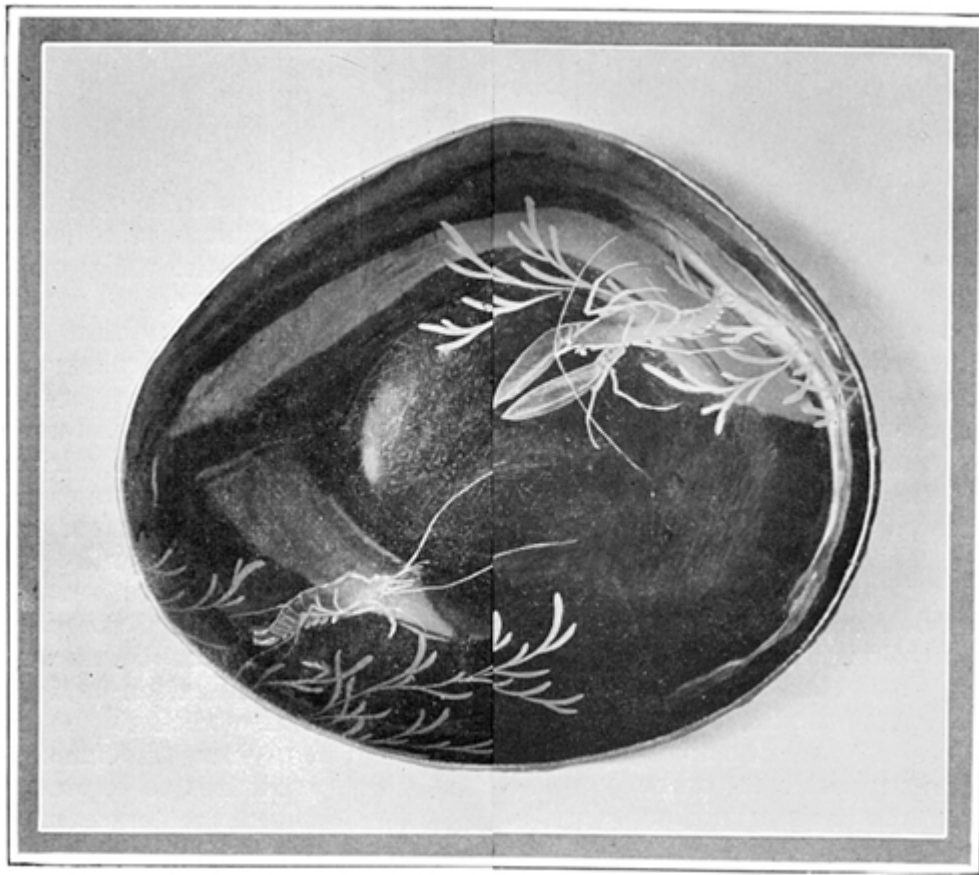


From a *surimono* by Toyohiro. The *Ebi Takara-bune*

As the *ebi* is a common motive of decoration used on objects associated with the New Year—particularly those designed for gifts, as well as on the *uchishiki*, “gift cloth”—it may be seen on objects made of every kind of material, such as textiles, ivory, lacquer, porcelain, and metal. The latter frequently is made into bronze jointed figures such as is shown in the accompanying reproduction. This exceptionally beautiful bronze is a product of the workshop of the celebrated Myōchin family, who as early as the twelfth century were makers of jointed armour, and later, extending their art, invented jointed animals such as this and the serpent of the preceding chapter. The jointed crab shown in another illustration is by an unknown workman of a later period.

The use of the *ebi* as a symbol of longevity is not limited to the New Year festivities, but also occurs at the marriage ceremony, where it is a popular article of the feast as well as a decorative motive on the beautiful red lacquer *saké* cups.

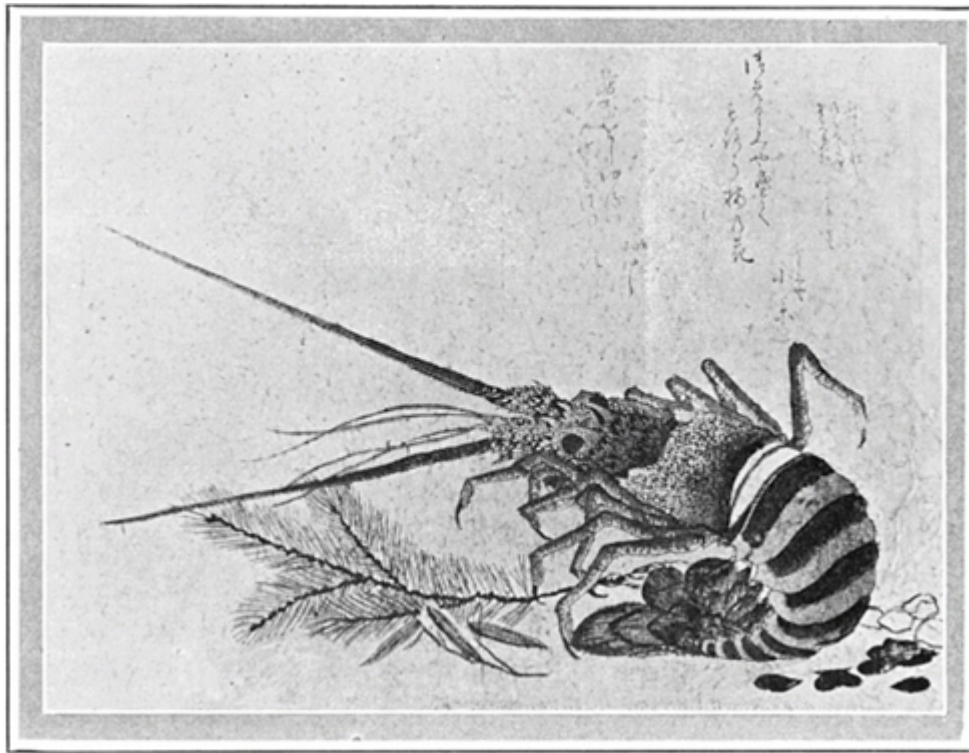




From a lacquered shell-shaped bowl

From a lacquered

It was also used as a *mon*, “crest,” by the Ichikawa school of actors, having been introduced in the *mi-masu*, “three corn-measures device,” by Ichikawa Danjūrō IV when he, in 1772, took the name of Ebizo. It was also adopted by both Ebijūrō I and Ebijūrō II in the early nineteenth century. In the accompanying illustration of a *surimono* by Yūshin—showing the actor Ishikawa Danjūrō V in the congratulatory performance—the *mi-masu* is most conspicuous on the sleeves of the coat, but only a portion of the *ebi*, a pattern unit, appears between the folds of the drapery.



From a *surimono*. New Year Offerings

The shrimp, known as *shibaebi*, is not only a favoured motive with painters, but with decorators as well, who delight in representing it swimming among marine plants, an example of which is given in the illustration of a lacquer shell-shaped bowl.

The crab in China, known as *p'ang hsieh*, plays almost as important a part in the Hermit Kingdom as it did among the ancients of the West. In both civilizations it is one of the signs of the zodiac.

In the sign of Cancer it symbolizes the oblique or retrograde movement of the sun after it crosses the summer solstice and takes a backward course. This meaning was undoubtedly derived from the creature's habit of always proceeding sidewise, although it is able to move in any direction without turning. It was this sidewise movement that led the Orientals to designate the European penmanship as "crabwriting" because it is done horizontally, while their ideographs are always written in vertical columns.





From a *surimono* by Yūshin. The Actor Danjurō V

Another significance given to the locomotive processes of the creature is that of crookedness and unreliability. Hence, dishonest people, particularly money-changers, are referred to as crabs.

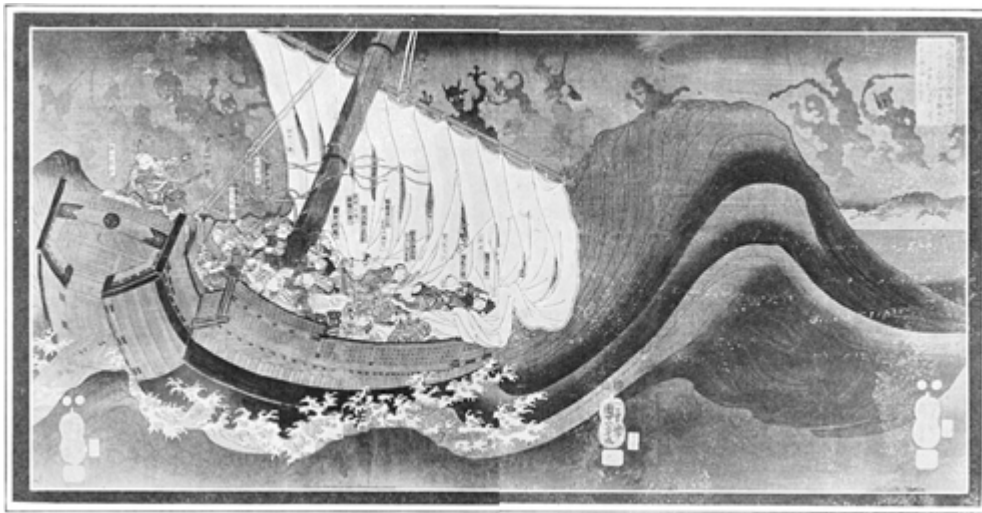
In China this crustacean was given quite an important significance. On account of its habit of hibernation, the Buddhists, particularly those of the north-west and in Tibet, held it to be symbolical of the sleep of death between incarnations, or the period of regeneration between successive births. For this reason, in the remote parts of the Empire and up in the Himalayas, sacred crabs are kept in vessels of porcelain and other materials in front of the temples. Such an one—representing a lotus leaf and bud, stem entwined, holding the sacred crab—cut from a single piece of white jade, recently displayed in a local shop, proves the relationship of the crab to Buddhism.

Again, it is stated that in the temple gardens, banks of white sand are provided for the accommodation of the innumerable small crabs that overrun the place; and should one of them die during hibernation, it is regarded as ominous of disaster, generally foreboding the death of some member of the priestly order. Notwithstanding this superstition, there are some Chinese who believe that the crab never dies, for they claim that not only is it ever protected by its shelly covering, but it has the power, of restoring its claws when accidentally lost. A clue to the interpretation of this latter significance may be traceable to Egyptian symbology, where the sign of Cancer is represented by the *scarab*, which was held to be not only the emblem of creation but of immortality.



From the real crab. A *Heihe-gani*

As a decorative motive, like other crustaceans, the crab is frequently used in combination with marine plants, particularly on table ware while again it is sometimes shown in connection with two of the Eight Immortals, Li T'ieh-kuai and Ts'ao Kuo-ch'iu, both of whom are shown using it as a steed.



From a coloured triptych by Attacking Yoshitsune's Kuniyoshi. The Ghosts of the Heike Ship at Ōmono no Oki

It is also a factor at the birth of a child, where, in combination with ten or twenty pieces of grass, either real or cut from paper, it is burned in a censer while a priest recites classics appropriate for the occasion. The creature is thus used to frighten away evil spirits or to propitiate them so that they may not harm the child. This significance is another instance of a symbol being derived from a homophone, for here the characters for "demon" and for "crab" have the same sound.

In Japan the crab is called *kani*, and there appears to be very little symbology attached to it. It is used as a motive by painters and decorators, but not to any great extent, and then the small variety known as the *sasagani* is chosen and combined with the *ashi* plant. Of the kinds of this crustacean one is said to be so gigantic—its legs measuring as much as a yard and a half in length—that it is able to kill and devour a human being. Another, with a carapace measuring two feet in width, is found on the

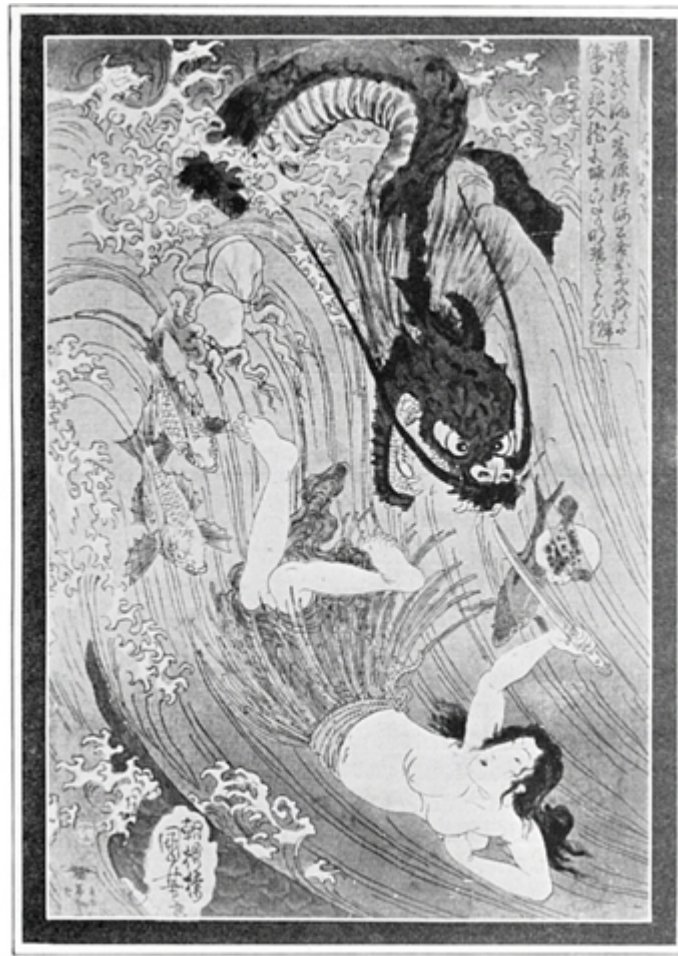
island of Hokkaidō, while quite the reverse of this are small prawns known as the *heike-gani*, the *taisho-gani*, and the *tatsuga-shira*, which are found at Akamagaseki in the straits of Shimonoseki. These creatures are the objects of a very singular superstition, for they are supposed to be the ghostly remains of the Heike or Taira forces who, at the battle of Dan no ura in 1185—the greatest battle in the annals of Japan—were defeated by the Genji or Minamoto clans, and drowned.



From a coloured wood-cut by Hokusai

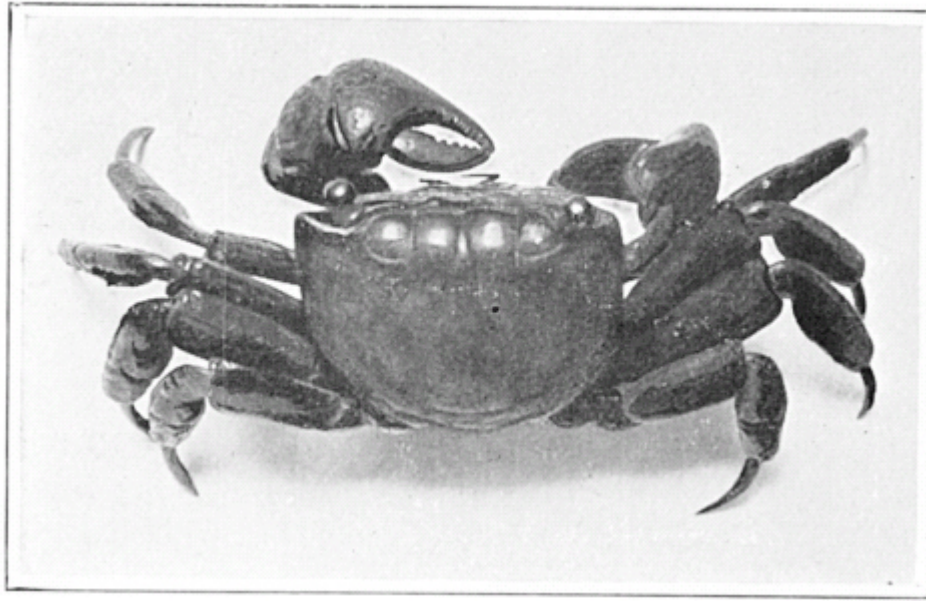
The *heike-gani*—the illustrated example herewith shown being a photographic reproduction of one in actual size—bear on their backs bosses and depressions which curiously resemble a human face in agony. These are believed to be animated by the spirits of the warriors, the *samurai*, while the *taisho-gani*, “chieftain crabs,” and the *tatsuga-shira*, “dragon-helmet crabs,” are supposed to embody the officers, who were distinguished from their subordinates by their imposing helmets.





From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. The *Ama* Battling with the Dragon

Two leading figures of the victorious Genji or Minamoto clan were the invincible Yoshitune and his retainer, Benkei. In the given illustration of a triptych by Kuniyoshi, the battleship commanded by the young hero, with the giant priest at the prow, is shown driving through a turbulent sea at Ōmono no Oki, harassed by the angry spirits of the Heike. Frequently in the representations of Benkei's fight with the ghosts, innumerable crab surround the boat.



From a bronze jointed figure

An event in the lives of Yoshitune and Benkei, known to every schoolboy in Japan, is that of Gojō bridge, where the youthful nobleman, by his agility in jumping, overcame the giant bonze, and made him his lifelong friend and retainer. This episode may be found represented in books of illustrations by a very interesting rebus consisting of a bat flying over a crab, the bat symbolizing Yoshitune and the crab Benkei.

Another legend of similar character is associated with the warrior Shimamura Danjō Takanori, who in 1531 fought against the *daimyō* of Awa in the straits of Amagasaki, and, being defeated, drowned himself. From that date the crabs found in the neighbourhood had the face of a warrior delineated upon them, hence they were called *Shimamura-gani*. An illustration of this warrior standing among crabs is given in an accompanying woodcut by Kuniyoshi.

Molluscs in China, except in combination with marine plants, are rarely seen in the arts, but quite the opposite is true in Japan, for in addition to being used as decorative motives, the form of their shells is quite commonly copied for objects like boxes and bowls.

Among shell-fish common to Japan, the sea-ear, known as *awabi*, is perhaps best known. Besides being a highly prized article of food it has a shell which is valuable not only for the pearls frequently found within it, but for its own lustrous, iridescent beauty when inlaid in patterns on various materials, particularly lacquer and porcelain, or when made into jewellery and various small articles such as boxes, spoons, and the like.





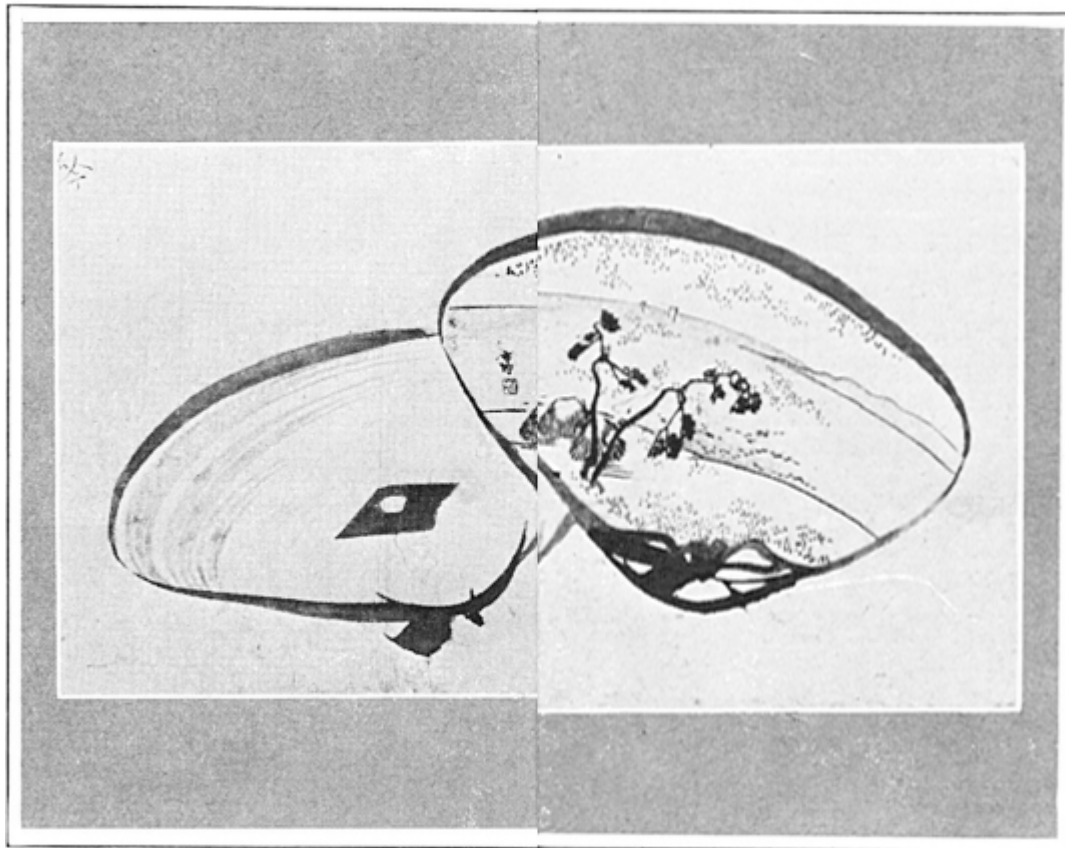
From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. The Warrior Shimamura Danjō Takanori

*Awabi* gathering prevails sporadically all over Japan, but the most notable places are at Ise in the Bay of Owari, and at Izu near Enoshima. It is done by women, the wives of fishermen, and their success as divers is due to their ability to hold their breath in swimming for a much longer period than is possible for any of the men. They are called *ama*, “fisher-women.” They begin their hazardous occupation when mere children and continue it to an advanced age. They are so sturdy that they never cease their diving even in the coldest winter weather, only favouring themselves by coming to the surface periodically to get warm. They always wear red skirts which are said to frighten away the sharks.





From a coloured triptych by Utamaro. The *Awabi-shell* Divers at Ise



From a *surimono*. *Kai-awase* Shells

The *ama* has ever been a most picturesque character. Her free marine life has given her a glamour which has inspired many a poem, particularly in the province of Shima, where during the romantic days of the Empire she was known as the *Shima no ama*

The most celebrated diver in Japanese history is Mugé, the fisher-girl, the heroine of the legend of *Mugé Hō-jiu no Tama*, referred to in [Chapter I](#). This legend pertains to a much-prized jewel which had been sent to Dai-shokukwan Kamatari, a *kugé* living in the seventh century, by his daughter. She was

the consort of the Chinese Emperor Tai Tsung, and desired to found a temple in her native land. For this she collected many treasures, among which was the *Hōjiu* gem. She entrusted it to a retainer of her father by the name of Manko. So beautiful was this jewel that its fame reached the Dragon King, Ryūjin. Coveting it, he sent his demon hordes to waylay the ship that carried it and seize it; but the venture was not successful. Then he decided to resort to strategy. So, one day, the attention of the unsuspecting Manko was attracted to a singular-looking log floating upon the water. Impelled by curiosity concerning it, he had it hauled up on to the deck and cut open. Then, to his surprise, therefrom stepped a most beautiful young woman. Her acquaintance had barely been made before she beguiled him to show her the precious jewel. Three days later, to his sorrow, both the lady and the jewel disappeared. He was in despair; but when at last Kamatari heard the distressing news, he at once began to devise plans for its recovery. He went to Fukuzaki, a town in the vicinity of the place where the gem had been stolen, hoping that in some way he might gain a clue regarding it. There, in time, he met a very beautiful diver, whom he married. After they had lived happily together for three years, a child was born. Then Kamatari felt, for its sake, he should reveal his identity. But Mugé' upon hearing that he was a nobleman, was much distressed, for she knew that she was of too lowly a birth to be his wife. She therefore told him that she would have to end her life. He tried to dissuade her from such an act, but she would not heed his plea. Then, realizing that nothing he could say would make her change her mind, he concluded that if she were determined to die, her sacrifice should be made for a good cause. So he related to her the story of the loss of the jewel and asked her if she would attempt to recover it. Consenting, at once she sprang into the sea, and for seven days he sat anxiously awaiting her return. She finally appeared, but quite exhausted and much troubled because she had failed. She said that she had located the treasure in the dragon's palace, but it was guarded by fierce and unapproachable monsters.





From a porcelain of the plaque. The Mirage *Hamaguri*



From a coloured woodcut by Hokusai. A Successful *Ama*





From a coloured woodcut by Nagahide. The Bittern and Mussel

Kamatari then decided upon a second attempt, and devised a plan to decoy the dragons from the palace through their love of music. He fitted up a ship with a choir that should send forth the most enchanting melodies and lure these fierce denizens of the deep to the surface of the waters. Then Mugé, with a light-giving crystal in her hair, a rope around her waist, and a sharp blade in her hand, set forth a second time on her hazardous errand. Into the depths she swam, and finding the palace entirely deserted, she had little difficulty in securing the gem. Encouraged by her success, she hastened to return, but her rapid movements in the water attracted a belated dragon. It pursued and overtook her and a bitter struggle ensued. She fought desperately, defending herself with her sword, but the poisoned fangs of the monster so lacerated her that she finally succumbed to the onslaught.

Kamatari all the while sat prayerfully watching and waiting for her return. Suddenly he saw something floating on the waters which, as it drifted towards the shore, proved to be her poor mangled body. Entirely forgetful of the cause of her adventure, but grieving over her death, he had her body recovered, and as he stood looking at it, his attention was called to a self-inflicted wound in her heart. This, upon examination, revealed a singular light which emanated from what proved to be the precious jewel.

In the illustration entitled “The *Ama* Battling with the Dragon,” Kuniyoshi, in his exceptional style, has represented the brave woman, with dagger in one hand and the jewel in the other, fleeing from the monster whose gaping jaws seem about to seize her. Among the three other given illustrations pertaining to the *ama*, that of “The *Awabi-shell* Divers at Ise “by Utamaro is the most notable. It represents these water nymphs as amazons of great strength, power, and beauty, in one of the most beautiful compositions of this master. Hoku-sai’s “A Successful *Ama*” showing the diver rising in the water with her prize, is equally beautiful, although in quite another vein. This representation of the movement of the figure through the sea currents has few parallels in the art of the Ukiyo-ye school, and the print is not only rare, but one of Hokusai’s greatest achievements. The remaining one, “Gathering *Awabi* at Futami Beach “by Toyokuni II, while not so distinguished artistically as the other two, is of considerable interest. It not only represents a very popular summer diversion, that of a picnic on the seashore with a feast of the delicious *awabi*, but one in which the gay Beau Brummel, Prince Genji, participates. He, surrounded by attendants, occupies a position in the right of the picture facing two *ama* in the opposite corner. In the background is portrayed the famous *Myōto-sehi*, “Wife and Husband Rocks,” joined together by a *shime*, “straw rope.” The latter has a double significance; first, that of conjugal union, and again, that of the protection of the coast from all evil influences.

The origin of the straw rope is attributed to Susano-o who, in return for hospitality received from a poor villager, foretold the coming of a plague and advised him to wear a belt of twisted grass as a protection against the disease, and to tie a straw rope across the entrance of his house. This accounts for the custom, common in many localities, of extending a straw rope across the highways in order to ward off infectious diseases.

The Japanese consider Futami one of the most picturesque places on their coasts. The view eastward, including islands and bays, is very beautiful—even distant Fuji no yama being visible at times. The supreme experience, however, at this famous resort is to rise early, while the landscape is partially veiled by a violet haze, and see the sun rise between the twin rocks.

Another mollusc surrounded by a veil of mystery inviting symbology is the *hamaguri*, a sort of clam, to which is attributed the power of creating illusions by exhaling a vapour that envelops a mirage of the dragon-palaces at the bottom of the sea. This performance, known as *shinkirō*, “lip-breathing castle,” is most graphically portrayed in the accompanying illustration of a porcelain plaque entitled “The Mirage of the *Hamaguri*.”

*Shinkirō*, also referred to as “The Clam’s Dream,” is another subject that has furnished a theme for poets.

The following are taken from Hearn’s *Goblin Poetry*”:

When the *hamaguri* opens its mouth—Lo !

*Shinkirō* appears ! . . .

Then all can see the maiden princess in the dragon palace !

Lo ! In the offing at ebb-tide

The *hamaguri* makes visible the miniature image of *Shinkirō*—The dragon capital !

The *hamaguri* is used in the game of *kai-awase*, consisting of several hundred shells in which one of a pair of valves bears a poem or an emblem, and the other a picture relating to it, as shown in the accompanying illustration entitled “Kai-awase Shells.” One set is thrown upon the floor and the other is distributed among the players, the game being to find those which match each other. This mollusc is also a popular article of diet, being made into soup, particularly for the wedding feast, doubtless due to its being a bivalve; while, on the other hand, there is quite a superstition about the *awabi*, which, having but one shell, is not only regarded as the symbol of *kata-omoi*, “one-sided love,” but also of an unfortunate man or woman who has failed to get a mate.

In the illustration of “The Bittern and Mussel” the *hamaguri* is shown in a quarrel with a bird. The legend, taken from what is considered to be the earliest complete fable on record in Chinese literature, relates that an inoffensive mussel was lying on a river bank when the bird lit upon it and pecked it.

The mussel simultaneously closed its shell, holding on to the bird's beak. Thus they held each other prisoners until a fisherman chanced by and seized them both. The Japanese have adapted this legend to a dance which the print by Nagahide, herewith given, represents. It is designed to teach that in a quarrel where neither yields, both are likely to perish.

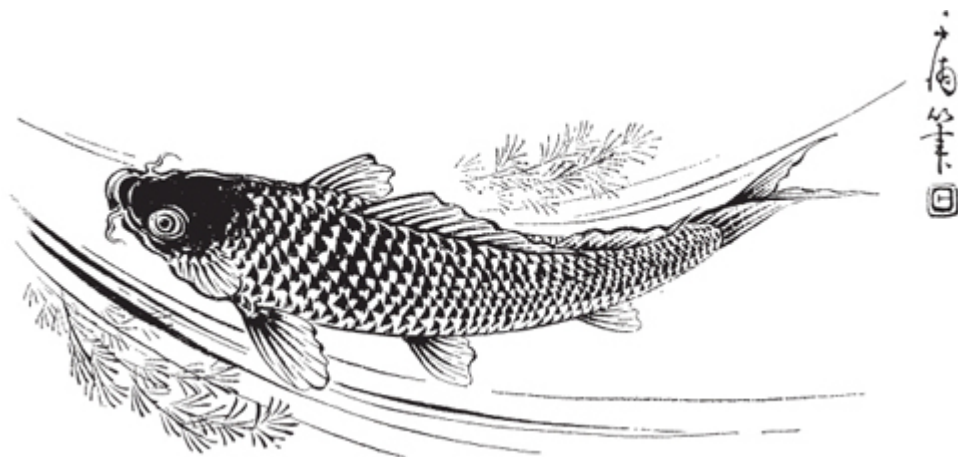
Another shell famous in legend and art is the conch. This was originally sacred to Vishnu, the second person of the Hindu triad, and used as a trumpet blown at his temples when making an offering. This shell, according to the Vishnu Purāna, was the form assumed by the demon Panchajana, who lived in the bottom of the sea. Krishna killed him and used the inanimate shell as a horn, the blowing of which was said to terrify the demon hosts, while reassuring the gods. This myth accounts for the use of the conch shell by the Buddhist priests to call the order to worship.



## CHAPTER XXV

### THE FISH

*Beneath o'erhanging branches, green,  
In waters cool and deep,  
The hing of fish disports himself  
Amidst his kith and kin.  
In armour bright his course pursues,  
A warrior ever bold,  
And naught can make him turn aside  
From purpose fixed and true.  
But when, perchance, he meets a fate  
Unworthy of his rank,  
He faces it with calm intent  
And ne'er resists nor seeks escape.  
So does the noble Samurai  
When all is lost and hope has fled,  
Meet foe and fire and his doom  
In Tamashii's knightly way.*



From a painting by Chiura

THE fish is one of the most popular motives of oriental art, particularly in Japan, where it is to be found on all applied arts ranging from the most commonplace *tenugi*, “towel,” to the revered *kakemono* which adorns the *tokonoma*.

While the traditional subjects pertaining to it have come from China, the exquisite compositions which adorn Nipponese wares—through the arts of the needle, the loom, the brush, and the chisel—are distinctly Japanese, revealing not only a sympathetic intimacy with nature, but an exceptional sense of the beauty of form and the grace of motion characteristic of the finny tribe.

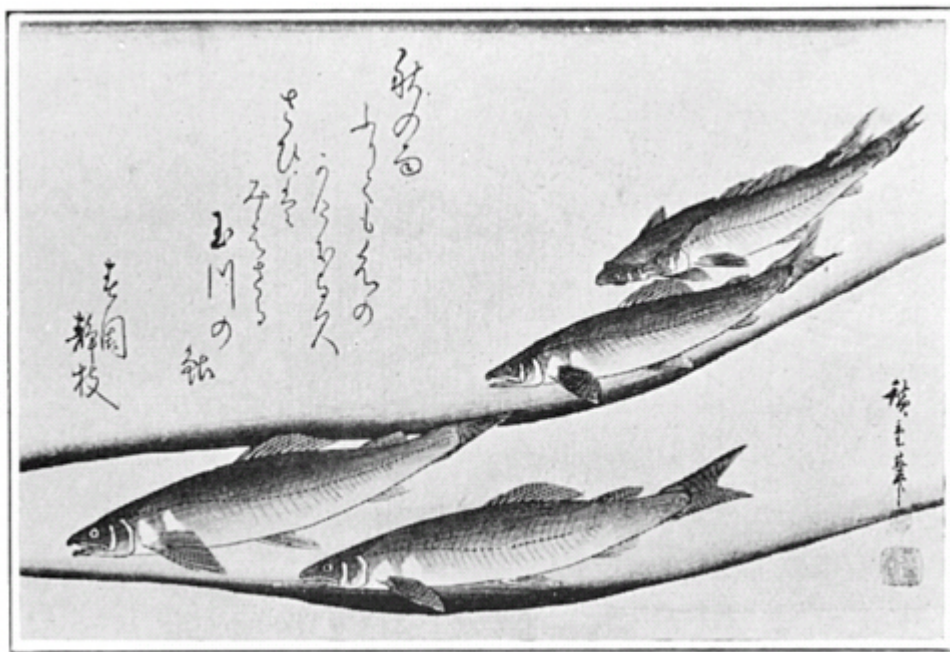
The fish most commonly used for decorative purposes is the carp, known in China as *yü* and in Japan as *koi*. The Chinese tradition concerning it relates that it was a native of Huang Ho, “Yellow River,” and each year in the third month, in order to reach the head-waters of the stream to spawn, it had to leap the cataract of Wu Mên and swim the rapids of Lung Mên, an achievement that so commanded the admiration of the Chinese that they chose it as a symbol of vigour, endurance, perseverance, and power; and for centuries they have held it before their youths as an example for

emulation. They taught their boys that the carp that succeeded in leaping the waterfall and making the ascent of the river became a dragon—being sometimes called *ch'ih lung*, “tender dragon”—and strongly impressed upon them the idea that as this fish overcomes all the obstacles of the river, so they must surmount all the difficulties and trials of life if they would become the human dragon.

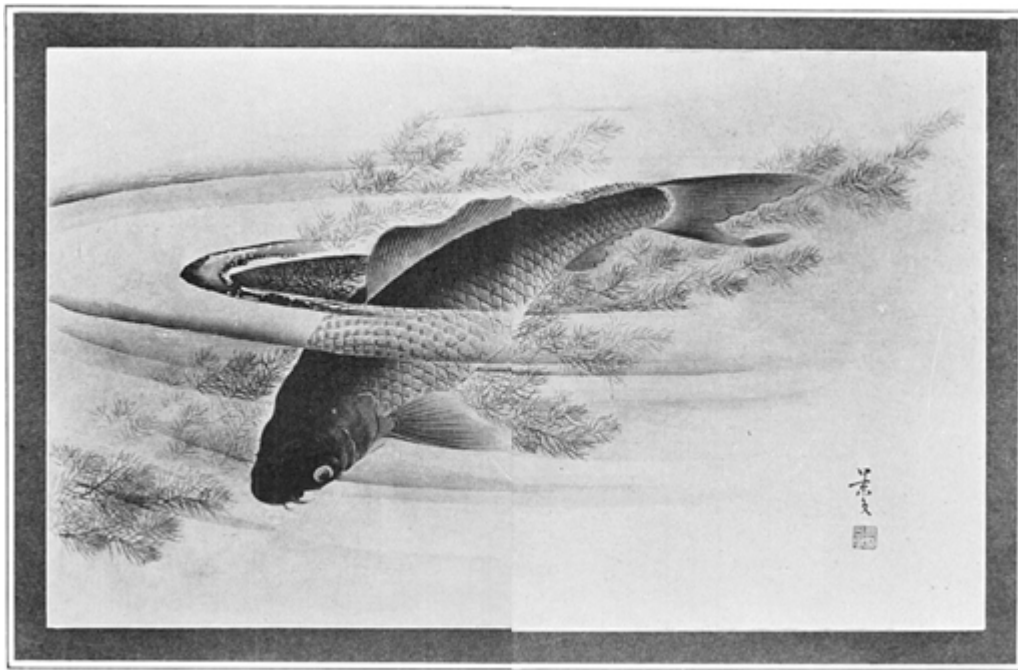
This precept was particularly applied at the time of the annual examination for literary honours, when those who succeeded were referred to as “the fishes which became transformed into dragons,” and were said to have leaped the dragon gate of *Lung Mên*.

The Japanese adopted the symbol, but not the system of examination; therefore in order to keep this worthy admonition constantly in the minds of their boys, they used most extensively, for decorative purposes, the subjects of *Taki Nobori*, “Leaping the Waterfall,” and *Shisei no Koi*, “The Earnest Carp.” The former is shown in the accompanying illustrations by Tokugen and Keisai Yeisen, and the latter in the woodcut by Hiroshige. *Shisei no Koi* was a term applied to advancement of official rank, particularly in relation to the *samurai*, who also were advised to eat of the carp—not only when about to go to war, but at festivals commemorative of a victory—so that they might imbibe the heroic qualities of the creature.

But the most important use of this fish is at the Boys’ Festival, which occurs on the fifth day of the fifth month, for which reason it is called *Tango no Sekku*. It is also referred to as *Goget-su Sekku*, “Fifth Month Festival,” while foreigners speak of it as the “Feast of Flags”; for upon this happy occasion, everywhere all over the empire huge brilliantly coloured fishes of paper or cloth, known as *hoi nobori*, “carp flags,” attached to high bamboo poles, float gracefully against the sky. As they are hollow with an opening at both ends, the wind is able to sweep through them, filling out the tail and fins as well as the body, causing them to struggle as if swimming against a current.



From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige. *Ayu*



From a painting by Keibun

While every son of a household is represented with one fish flag, some boys are fortunate in having many which they have received either as gifts or have inherited.

The floating fish flags are beautifully represented in the accompanying illustration by Hiroshige. This woodcut is one of the *Meisho Yedo Hyak'kei*, "One Hundred Views of Yedo," and is known as *Suidō-bashi Suruga-dai*, "The Suidō Bridge from Suruga-dai," the latter being a hillside which offers a favourable place to see the famous bridge, as well as the *koi nobori* of the Boy's festival, with the peerless Mount Fuji in the background.

One of these *nobori* figures in an amusing episode shown in the given woodcut by Yoshitoshi, entitled "The Surprise." It depicts Shōki, the demon-queller, in the act of pulling out of a *nobori* one of his imps who had there concealed himself.



From a coloured wood-cut by Hiroshige

Shōki is always in attendance at the Boys' Festival, for he is a person that is held up for boyish emulation on account of his attitude of defending the right and chastening the wrong. He is believed to spend his time in subjugating the evil tendencies of the *oni*, "little demons," that are very apt to be lurking about small boys and tempting them to bad deeds. He is an inheritance from the China of the eighth century, where he was known as Chung Ku'ei. The legend pertaining to him relates that, as a youth, he failed to pass the Imperial examinations, and in chagrin committed suicide. The Emperor, in sympathy, conferred upon him posthumous honours, whereupon, in gratitude, he assumed the rôle of a guardian to his benefactor against demons.

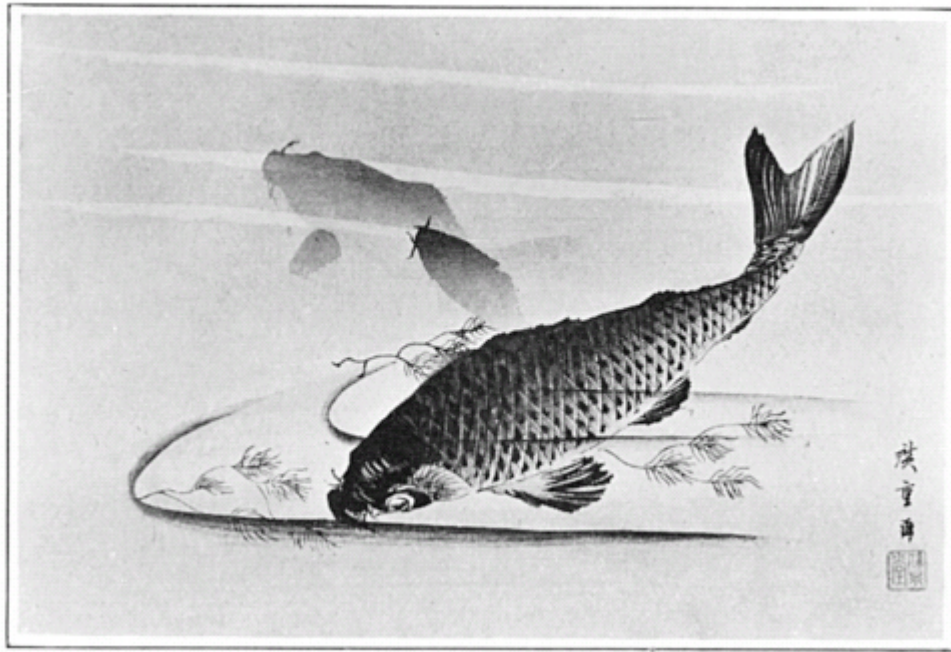
The following is the Japanese version of the story, taken from the Ehon KOJIDEN: "The Emperor Gensō (Ch. Ming Huang, A.D. 713–762) was once attacked by ague and, in his sickness, dreamed that he saw a small demon in the act of stealing the flute of his mistress, Yokihi (Ch. Yang Kuei-fei). At the same moment a stalwart spirit appeared and seized the demon and ate him. The Emperor asked the name of the being, who replied, 'I am Shiushi Shōki of the Shunan mountain. In the reign of the Emperor Kōsō (Ch. Kao-tsu) of the period Butoku (Ch. Wu-tê, A.D. 618–627) I failed to attain the position to which I aspired in the State examination and, being ashamed, I slew myself. But at my burial I was honoured by Imperial command with posthumous rank, and now I desire to requite the favour conferred upon me. To this end I will expel all the devils under heaven.' Gensō awoke and found that his sickness had disappeared. He then ordered Go Dōshi (Ch. Wu Tao-tzū) to paint the portrait of the demon-queller and distribute copies of it over the whole kingdom."



From a coloured woodcut by Tokugen. Leaping the Waterfall

In Chinese art Chung Ku'ei is generally represented as a ragged old man accompanied by a bat, but the Japanese picture him as a warrior, grim-visaged and fierce with flowing beard, and in martial garb, carrying a two-edged sword. He is generally shown as punishing some small, apparently inoffensive imp, or demanding menial service from another. Again, he is portrayed chasing the little *oni*, who flee from him and hide in all sorts of places, such as under a bridge or in the hollow of a tree; and, not infrequently, the little demons reverse the order by making him the object of their pranks.





From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige. *Koi*

For some unknown reason he is supposed to be painted in but one colour, usually red. He was unusually popular with the artists of the Ukiyo-ye school, due, doubtless, to the demand for his portrait, which was believed to be efficacious in preventing fire.

But the carp has still another and more important meaning attached to it, nothing less than the great and noble spirit of Japan, *Yamato Damashii*. For when this fish has had the misfortune to fall into the hands of a cook—since it is a most popular article of diet—it never behaves in an unseemly manner by jumping about and trying to get away like the plebeian *tai*, but lies still and meets its fate with dignified demeanour. Thus it typifies the *samurai*, who never flinches under fire, nor forsakes his post of duty, but remains faithful and, when necessary, meets his death with resignation.

Another individual regarded as a similar model of conduct is Kintarō, “The Golden Boy,” so frequently represented performing extraordinary feats of courage and strength—illustrations of which have been given in preceding chapters. In this chapter he is shown in the act of his first great achievement. The legend concerning it relates that one day, while going with his mother to the mountains to gather fagots, he divined the presence of a monster carp in a near-by stream. Realizing the danger to the fishermen, he jumped into the water, unhesitatingly swam to it, and mounted its back. Then, seizing the small dirk which he carried, he forthwith slew it. The accompanying woodcut by Yoshitoshi illustrates this event, which is known as Kintarō *Hi-goi Toru*, “Kintarō capturing the Red Carp.” This print is one of the most beautiful compositions of the Ukiyo-ye school. The organic line of attraction, beginning at the top with the mother, and following along the body of the fish, crosses the rhythmic lines representing the water at a very subtle angle, quite suggestive of the followers of Hokusai.

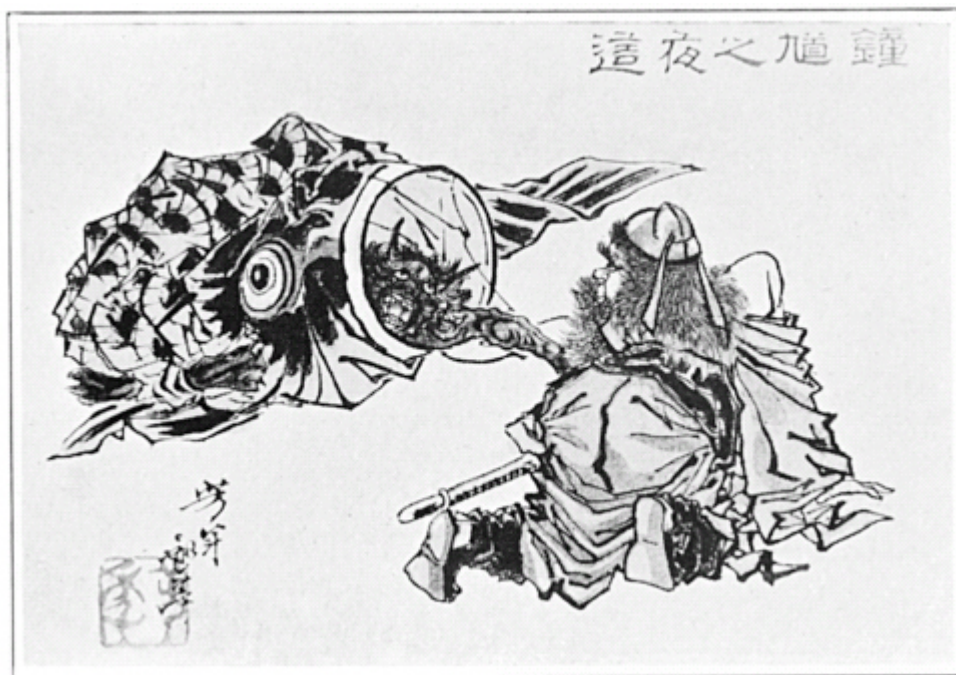
Another fish constantly found in the illustrative arts is the *tai*, above referred to, a kind of gold-bream, which is esteemed a great table delicacy. It is the principal attribute of Ebisu—one of the *Shichi-fukujin*, “Seven Gods of Happiness”—who is ever depicted as a fisherman with his *tai* under his arm, in his fishing-basket, or at the end of his line, as in the accompanying illustration by Sesshō of “Ebisu the Fisherman.”





From a coloured woodcut by Keisai Yeisen. Leaping the Waterfall

A fish which for centuries has caused great concern among the unsophisticated Japanese is the *Namazu* also known as the *Jishin-uwo*, “Earthquake fish,” a sort of fabulous catfish, described as having the body of an eel, a flat head, and a pair of long feelers. Its contortions are said to cause the tremblings of the country. In proof of this belief there are quite a number of woodcuts illustrating scenes where propitiatory offerings are made to appease this creature, which is said to lie under the provinces of Shimōsa and Hitachi on the east coast. Here, a stone known as the *Kaname Ishi*, “Pivot Rock,” lodged in an enclosure at the back of the temple of Kashima, is said to stand on its back and act as a sort of restraint to its movements.



From a coloured woodcut by Yoshitoshi. The Surprise



From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige. The Carp Flag

This stone, although quite insignificant in appearance, is held to be a pillar which extends to the centre of the earth; for Mitsukuni, Daimyō of Mito, the grandson of Tokugawa Ieyasu, had the earth dug about it for six successive days without finding its base. Regarding its origin, it is related that the gods, Kashima Dai Myōjin and Kadori Myōjin, came from Heaven to subdue the world. Hence, Kashima thrust his sword through the earth down to the back of the *Namazu*, and the mighty blade became transformed into the *Kaname Ishi*. Kadori carried a magic gourd which he in turn used to quiet the creature. In the accompanying illustration by Kuniteru, entitled “A Vain Endeavour,” the god Ebisu, before referred to, is shown in the act of striving to hold down the catfish with a gourd. The text on the print gives the following: “Everybody has tried to catch the *Namazu* with the gourd, but no one has succeeded; so after the eight million gods had failed, Ebisu, the fisherman, was called upon to perform the task.”





From a *surimono* by Shunman. Fish Head and Bean Measure



From a painting by Korin. The *Sennin Kinkō*

Holding down a catfish with a gourd, known to the Japanese as *Hyōtan Namazu*, is a popular epigram, significant of attempting the impossible. Its principal representation may be found among the traditional *Ōtsu-ye*, the rough brush sketches by Matahei which were the precursors of what are now known as Japanese prints, and consists of an *amma*, “blind masseur,” holding a gourd to a catfish, the blind man having been chosen because he was unable to see the absurdity of the undertaking. This subject is undoubtedly a joke derived from the similarity between the Japanese words for “joke,” *jodan*, and “gourd,” *hyōtan*, both of which are, in comic sketches, made to proceed out of the mouth of a simpleton.

The *Namazu* and gourd are also used as a rebus, to express an inference which could not openly be expressed, such as the gourd, typifying the helplessness of the people in their effort to control the tyrannical military typified by the catfish.

The regard in which the fish is held by the Japanese is ever in evidence. For example, a piece of dried fish ever accompanies a gift not only as an admonition to the prosperous to be humble, but to remind them that their progenitors were fishermen, and also to express the desire that the gift may be graciously received. The fish likewise is meant to convey the message of *ō-medetai kōtō*, “congratulation.” Therefore, upon festival occasions a fish, wrapped in bamboo leaves or done up in fresh pine, is sent with a ceremonial remembrance. This custom has given rise to the proverb: *Ivashi no atama mo shinjin gara*, “Even the head of a sardine can do something for you if you pray to it long enough.”



From a coloured woodcut by Taitō After a Fly

Again, during the ceremony known as *Tsui-na* or *Oniyarai*—observed at the New Year at the Buddhist and Shinto temples for the purpose of expelling demons—these being considered as the embodiment of disease, ill-luck and calamity in general—the head of a *gomane*, “dried sardine,” impaled upon a short stick and combined with a spring of *hiragi*, “holly,” is placed on the front door of every residence to ward off evil influences.





From a coloured woodcut by Kuniteru. A Vain Endeavour



From a *surimono* by Gakutei. *Fugu* Fish and Plum Blossoms

The *gomame* and *hiragi* are also used for the same purpose during the autumn ceremony for harvesting the crops. In the *surimono* by Shunman, *Masu ni Gomame*, Pish Head and Bean Measure, the measure with beans which is used by the *toshi otoko*, “year-man,” at the *Tsui-na*, appears in the upper part of the composition, while the poem of the inscription refers to the harvest festival as follows :

Here are the beans,  
It seems as if but yesterday

The crops had been planted.

The woodcut by Hiroshige, entitled *Ayu*, is one of the most popular renditions of fish in the Ukiyo-e school. The inscription in the upper left of the picture, according to a literal translation, reads :

Rain in autumn !  
Sometimes rain, sometimes not ;  
Sometimes see *ayu*, sometimes not.

This fish, the Trout, is doubly popular, being not only prized for its beauty, but as a table delicacy.

Another fish that is regarded as most palatable is the *katsuo*, Bonito, referred to as “the victory fish,” because of the homophone *katsu* meaning victory, and o, fish. Concerning it there is the following common saying :

What the grace of the sea-weed is to the eye, and the song of the nightingale is to the ear, the meat of the *katsuo* is to the palate.



From a coloured woodcut by Yoshitoshi. Kintarō's First Feat

In the *surimono* by Gakutei, entitled “*Fugu* Fish and Plum Blossoms,” another popular fish, the *fugu*, “globe-fish,” is portrayed. This species is not eaten unless especially prepared, for it is thought to be poisonous. But at Moji in the southwest of Japan, during the season when the plum trees are in



bloom, the cooks have a process of extracting the poison, thereby making it not only a wholesome but a very palatable dish. The poem inscribed on the *surimono* reads :



From a woodcut by Hokusai. Gyoran Kwannon

When you get rich you will grow corpulent and feel warm. But more than money will the soup of the *fugu* comfort you.



From a triptych by Kuninaga. Beauties Impersonating the Eight Immortals

Among the gods associated with the fish, Kwannon—before referred to in [Chapter XXIII](#) —the feminine manifestation of the Indian Avalokiteśvara, is quite commonly seen. While originally considered as non-sexual, this deity is capable of appearing in innumerable forms, male and female, human and animal, but never in any capacity except that of ministering to a suffering creation. For this reason she is known as the goddess of mercy.



From a woodcut by Hokusai.  
Gyoran Kwannon Appearing to Usuyuki-hime

The legend relating to this particular appearance of the divinity comes from China and is as follows :





From a painting by Sessho. Ebisu the Fisherman

“Miao Chên, a daughter of King Miao To-hou-ang, who lived 2587, B.C., desiring to follow an ascetic life, refused to marry and entered a monastery. Her father made numerous efforts to dissuade her from her purpose and, failing, resorted to persecution, imposing upon her extreme cruelties. But from these she came out unscathed; then he ordered her decapitation, but a great wind storm obscured the heavens, while a light enshrined her and the tutelary deity of that region, assuming the form of a tiger, carried her away to the mountains. Then, while in meditation, hearing the cries of doomed souls, she descended into hell, and, through her spiritual power, freed them. Upon her return, Buddha appeared to her on a cloud and advised her to retire to the island of P’u-to, at the same time giving her a peach from the garden of heaven, which not only was to keep her from hunger and thirst for a year, but to confer upon her immortality. Here she remained nine years and established the monasteries which are consecrated to her worship.”

She is frequently represented carrying a basket containing a fish. This attribute she acquired from the following incident: It happened that a son of the Dragon King in the form of a fish was disporting himself in shallow waters, when he became caught in a fisherman’s net and was carried to the markets for sale. Miao Chên, who had acquired the power of “all seeing,” discovered the danger of this scion of the sea, and sent her acolyte to buy the fish and free it. The Dragon King was so touched by her kindness to his son that he rewarded her with a gift of a magic pearl of great light.

She ultimately converted her parents to Buddhism and became a “Saviour of Men,” being able to remove all obstacles to their attainment of Amitabha’s paradise. She herself, however, refused to enter this abode of bliss as long as there were souls to be saved.



From a coloured woodcut by Harunobu. Reading a Love-letter

In her association with the fish, in Japan she is known as Gyoran Kwannon, an illustration of which is given in the beautiful composition by Hokusai. Here, as in that by Taitō, the movement of the fish appears to be in opposition to that of the water, but on closer inspection the parallelism of these two features is most apparent. And again, in another of the great master's drawings, "Gyoran Kwannon Appearing to Usuyuki-hime," the two principal features, the fish and the lady, though apart, are united, not only by the parallelism of their own lines, but by the oblique lines of the water. This exceptionally beautiful composition is a reproduction of an illustration of Bakin's novel, SONO NO YUKI, "The Garden of Snow," a legend of the Kamakura period. The scene here given represents Usuyuki-hime, the Light Snow Princess, with a lotus offering, receiving an answer to a prayer addressed to the All-Merciful Kwannon for deliverance from her enemies. The deity, holding the KWANNON KYŌ, a Buddhist scripture, appears back of the carp, radiating her beneficent light upon the distressed heroine.

Quite the reverse from the foregoing religious theme is the Harunobu woodcut, "Reading a Love-Letter." This composition is a rebus based upon the homophone of *hoi*, which may mean either "love" or "carp," hence the woman who symbolizes "love" is made to ride the carp, after the fashion of Kinkō. This also is a favourite theme of Ukiyo-ye designers.





From a coloured woodcut by Hokusai. The *Sennin Shiyei*

Two other personages are represented using a fish for a steed. One, Kinkō (Ch. Ch'in Rao), rides a carp through the waters as shown in the painting by Rōrin, and the other, Shiyei (Ch. Tzū Ying), rides a carp through the air, as depicted in the woodcut by Hokusai. Both are *sennin*, "mountain men," who devote their lives to the practice of austerity and teaching.

Kinkō was a Chinese recluse who not only was skilled in playing the lute and practising magic, but an expert in painting fishes. One day as he was bathing in the river, the Ring of Fishes appeared and volunteered to take him for a ride beneath the waters. Informing his disciples that he would be absent for a few days, he departed. After a month he returned on the back of a carp, observed not only by his disciples, but by a great number of people who, anticipating his return, were awaiting him on the river's banks. But he did not tarry long, for after enjoining the assemblage never to kill any fishes, his finny steed dived into the river and he disappeared for all time.

Shiyei was likewise a hermit. While fishing one day he drew in a red carp, and so beautiful was it in colour that he decided to keep it for a pet. He therefore placed it in a pond and daily fed it. With this care, it not only grew to be ten feet in length, but acquired horns and feelers, characteristics so unusual, that Shiyei deemed it a divine messenger and worshipped it. One day, the fish surprised him by talking, telling him that it would take him to heaven. Shortly after, a great storm occurred during which Shiyei, invited by the fish to mount its back, was borne away through the clouds and disappeared.

Kinkō is one of the Immortals that, in the triptych by Kuninaga, are impersonated by beauties. He is easily distinguished by his carp steed located in the middle of the picture. But, in this design, he is impersonated by a beauty who is reading a love-letter similar to the one shown in the Harunobu

woodcut. The other ladies of the group impersonate seven other *sennin* as follows: In the upper left of the picture, Ōshikyō (Ch. Wang Tzū-chiao) rides a white crane; below her, Chōkwarō (Ch. Chung Kuo Lao) holds a gourd from which she has conjured the small horse at her feet; to the right, on the ground, in front of the great carp, sits Chinnan (Ch. Ch'ên Nan), holding a bowl from which issues a column of smoke enveloping a dragon; at the latter's right sits Tekkai (Ch. Li T'ieh Kuai), breathing forth a diminutive reproduction of herself. To the right, and facing the latter, stands Korejin (Ch. Ku Ling-jên), with his tiger companion, the tail of which rises—true to tradition—in a sweeping curve back of the lady's head. Next on the right stands Chōkiuka (Ch. Chang Chiu-cho), cutting fragments of cloth from her garments, and tossing them into the air, where they instantly turn into butterflies. And below, in a kneeling position, Gama *Sennin* (Ch. Hou Hsien-hsing) plays with his fabulous toad.

Of the many animals used as art motives, the fish has ever offered exceptional material. Not only is its body—varied by its picturesque fins and tail—shapely, but being nimble, lithe, and sinuous, it is capable, in its various activities, of bending itself into most alluring curves as it freely moves about in its watery domain.

The attraction of the motive, however, is as much due to its association with water as to its own grace and charm. For in the many moods of this natural element—whether still, as in small inland bodies, revealing aquatic life and plants, and reflecting the surrounding landscape; or tossed about on rough seas, where it is wind-whipped into foaming billows which disappear in glorious spray-dispersing breakers, or falling in smooth sheets over great precipices, only to dash itself into clouds of veiling white mist—there are innumerable graphic possibilities. Therefore in the rendition of the piscine subject both artist and artisan not only have the opportunity of combining two extraordinarily attractive features in their compositions, but of relating them each to the other as they actually occur in life. For example, when the fish swims in placid waters, it ripples the waters gently, and leaves behind a wake of flowing, radiating lines; or when, in its attempt to vault the turbulent cataract by hurling its resolute body into the torrent, it breaks the surface of the waterfall into a pattern of stripes of varying widths.

A comparison of the given illustrations reveals a variety of ways of conceiving and treating this theme. For example, in the two woodcuts of *Ayu* and *Koi* by Hiroshige, the handling, while markedly different, is simple and suggestive. In the painting by Keibun it is a little more elaborately given, while in the Reading a Love-Letter by Harunobu, the waves are almost literal in their drawing. Again, in the painting of the *Sennin Kinkō* by Kōrin, and the woodcut, The Leaping Fish, by Hiroshige, the crests of the waves—generally referred to as the “dragon claw breakers”—are, in the former, quite impressionistic, while in the latter they are definitely delineated.

Again, in the woodcut, Gyōran Kwannon, by Hokusai, the water is no longer a representation of the actual, but a convention, its movement being portrayed in a rhythmical, reversed curve; and in the woodcut, After a Fly, by the same master of line, it is equally conventional, but of a different type. In the particular delineation of the fish there again is a definite convention. In its rendition, particularly of the carp, a distinct type for each of its parts is used, the seals especially always being arranged and represented with most accurate regularity.

In China, the painting of fish dates back to the T'ang dynasty (618–906) but its best examples are to be found in the Sung school (960–1277). In Japan it was during the Ashikaga period (1338–1573) that the subject became popular, the most notable painters being Nobuharu, Kinkyo, and their coterie. The former especially excelled in fish swimming among water plants. Later, this was a favourite subject with the Maruyama and Kanō schools, in the first half of the Tokugawa *Shōgunate*, early seventeenth century. From this time on artists generally have tried their brushes upon it, resulting in many famous pictures done by great painters. Among the latter the most celebrated is Ōkyo, the founder of the Maruyama or Shijō school. His art is regarded as distinctive, inasmuch as he is said to have abandoned the rules of the schools of all times, and to have gone direct to nature for his knowledge, as well as his inspiration. This, however, must not be interpreted to mean that he followed the methods of the schools of the Occident, whose aim is, with rare exceptions, literal, objective representation. Quite to the contrary, while he studied the physical forms of nature he aimed

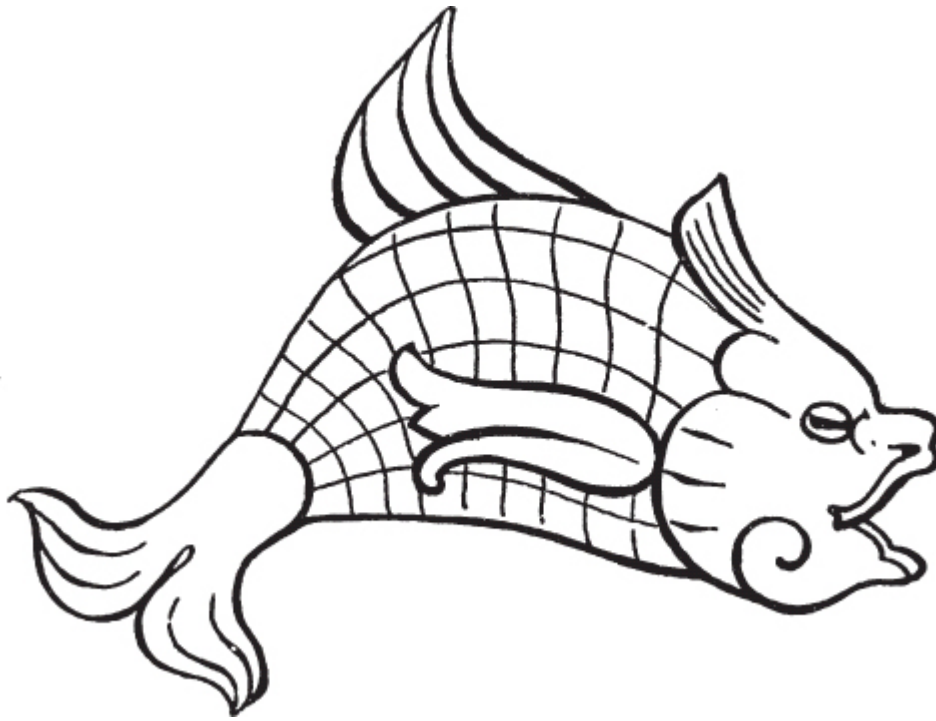
principally to interpret and represent the life and spirit of the sentient world. His art, being free from the arbitrary mannerisms and the meaningless elegancies of his predecessors, made such an appeal to his contemporaries that he effected a revolution in the art of Kyōto and created a new school.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE FISH

(Continued)

*It is a joyful thing to see  
In the blue of the deep,  
The freedom of its radiant life.  
Then it is that man reflects  
Upon his limitations.*



From a Mayan decoration. Drawn by Chiura

THE worship of the fish is one of the most ancient of religions. Not only inhabiting the sea—the great mysterious abyss which was believed to be the gulf between life and death—but being able to reach its utmost depths so impenetrable to man, this ever open-eyed creature of scales and fins came to be regarded as a symbol of great potency and supreme sanctity.

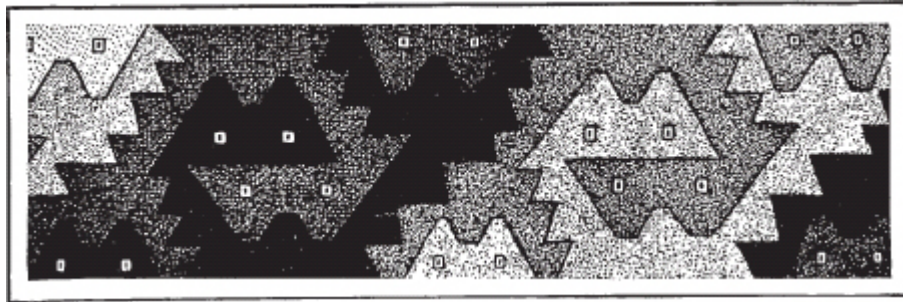
From time immemorial the belief prevailed that generation proceeded from the waters. This was doubtless due to two reasons: the arrival of a colonizer who came from some civilized nation bringing its arts and sciences, and the fecundity of all sea life. Hence the Creator is frequently depicted as issuing from a fishy sheath to the astonishment of an assembled humanity. This deity, sometimes male and sometimes female, was always worshipped as the god of procreation and abundance.

One of the earliest examples of this character is the Sumerian fish-god, Oannes, of whom the Babylonian historian Berosus wrote the following :

“In the first year there appeared from that part of the Erythrean Sea which borders upon Babylonia an animal endowed with reason, by name Oannes, whose body—according to the account of Apollodorus—was that of a fish; that under the fish’s head he had another head, with feet also below, similar to those of a man, subjoined to the fish’s tail. His voice and language, also, were articulate and human,

and a representation of him is preserved even unto this day. This being was accustomed to pass the day among men, but took no food at that season, and he gave them an insight into letters and arts of all kinds. He taught them to construct cities, to found temples, to compile laws, and explained to them the principles of geometrical knowledge. He made them distinguish the seeds of the earth, and showed them how to collect its fruits; in short, he instructed them in everything which could tend to soften manners and humanize their laws. From that time, nothing material has been added by way of improvement to his instructions. And when the sun set, this being, Oannes, retired again into the sea and passed the night in the deep, for he was amphibious. After this, there appeared other animals like Oannes.”

Another example of a deity, half man and half fish—described as the god, not of rivers and seas, but of the abyss, the ocean—who, like Oannes, brought the treasures of intellectual accomplishment from an advanced civilization, was the Assyrian Ea of the Nineveh tablets. This tradition finds substantiation in the various renditions of Syrian priests, who, when making their offerings to the sun-god, Baal, are shown enveloped in a skin of fish, the open-mouthed head of which forms the priest's head-covering, as represented in the accompanying illustration entitled “A Fish Deity.” It is interesting to note that this fish-head hood is claimed to be the origin of the modern Christian bishop's mitre.



From a Peruvian design

Again, the Phoenicians also had a fish-deity in Dagon, who is ever represented as half man and half fish. It is held that from the word *da-gon* the Hebrews derived their word for God; for the Hebrew word for fish, spelled variously *dg*, *dag*, or *deog*, is believed to have come from the Sanskrit *de* or *deo* and *ag* or *ab*, words that are allied to the solar *ak* and *aqu*, meaning “water.” Then, following the common habit of early peoples of reading a word either from left to right or right to left, the word “God,” or “Good One,” has been evolved. The Talmudic Messiah also was called Dag and had a fish for his attribute.





From a Mayan decoration. Drawn by Francisco Cornejo

Dagon's wife likewise was half fish. She is the reputed mother of the great mythical queen Semiramis, who lived some twenty-three centuries before Christ, and was noted for her vices as well as her virtues. She is said to have been the builder of many cities, including Babylon, and to have conquered Egypt and much of Asia, but failed in her attack upon India.





From an Egyptian Statue. Isis, Horus and the Fish

The idea of a creature, half woman and half fish, also prevailed in Greece, where mermaids, dwelling upon Sirens' Island, enticed with their songs the hapless voyager who, after being charmed to sleep, was destroyed. It was these malignant beings who laughed at the approach of a storm, and wept when the sun shone, that exercised such a powerful charm over Odysseus as he passed their eyrie.



From a Greek vase. Apollo Flying Over the Ocean

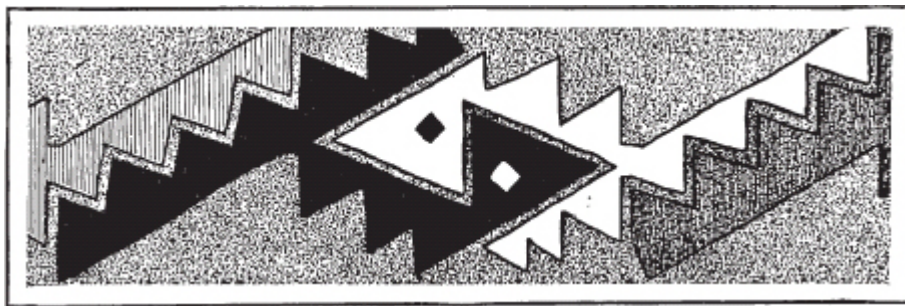
The mermaid is sometimes seen in the sculptures of India, but it is in Ireland where she is most famed. Originally a Danaan by the name of Muirgen, migrating from Asia, she was adopted by the native church and canonized as St. Darerea.

In Egypt the fish is associated with the great genetrix Isis—the wife of Osiris and the mother of Horus—who is shown in the given illustration of Isis, Horus and the Fish. Of this goddess the poet wrote :



From a Hindu stone image. Matsya, Vishnu's Fish Incarnation

The tears of the goddess, Isis, which fall into the Nile cause the inundation of the river and thus bring to the land abundance and wealth which means nourishment.



From a Peruvian design

There are other Great Mothers holding an infant who are associated with the fish and the watery element, such as the Buddhist Kuan-yin referred to in preceding chapters, and the Virgin Mary of the Christians.

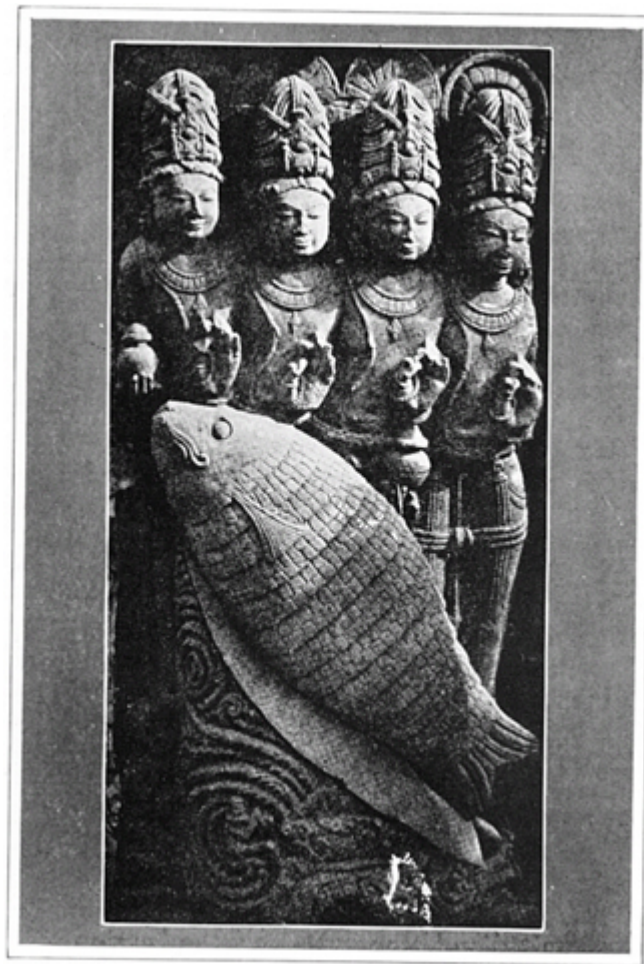


From an Assyrian sculpture. A Fish Deity

In Hindu mythology the deity represented as half human and half fish is Matsya, the fish incarnation of Vishnu, the second person of the Hindu Trinity. Vishnu—taken from the root word *vish*, “to pervade,” meaning the All-powerful, All-penetrating, and All-encompassing One—stands for Divine Intelligence or Wisdom.

This *avatār* of the deity was assumed to guide the ark of Manu—the progenitor of mankind—during the Deluge, and to steer it to a place of safety when the waters subsided. The oldest version of this legend is recorded in the SATAPATHA BRĀHMANA, and reads as follows :





From a Hindu sculpture. Vishnu's First *Avatār*

“One morning, when Manu was given water to wash his hands, he found in it a little fish that spoke to him, saying, ‘Take care of me and I will save thee.’ ‘From what wilt thou save me?’ asked Manu. The fish replied, ‘A deluge will drown all creatures and I will save thee from it.’ Manu then asked, ‘How shall I take care of thee?’ The fish answered, ‘So long as we are small, many dangers threaten us. One fish swallows another. First keep me in a pitcher, and when I am too large for it, dig a ditch and put me in that. When I am too large for the ditch, take me to the ocean, where I shall be beyond all danger.’ Quickly the fish grew into a *Jhasa*, which is the greatest among the fish. ‘In such and such a year,’ said the fish, ‘the flood will come. Then build a ship and call on me. When the floods rise, enter the ship and I will save thee.’ When the fish was grown, Manu brought him down to the sea and, in the year indicated, he constructed a ship and then called on the fish. When the floods came, he entered the ship. Then the fish swam up to the ship and Manu fastened the ship’s rope to his horn. After a while they arrived upon the Northern Mountains, and the fish said, ‘I have saved thee. Now tie thy ship to a tree so that, while thou art on the mountain, the water cannot cut thee off. Come down from the mountain when the water falls.’ Manu did as he was bidden, and this place on the Northern Mountains is even to-day called ‘The Descent of Manu.’ The floods destroyed all creatures and Manu alone survived.”



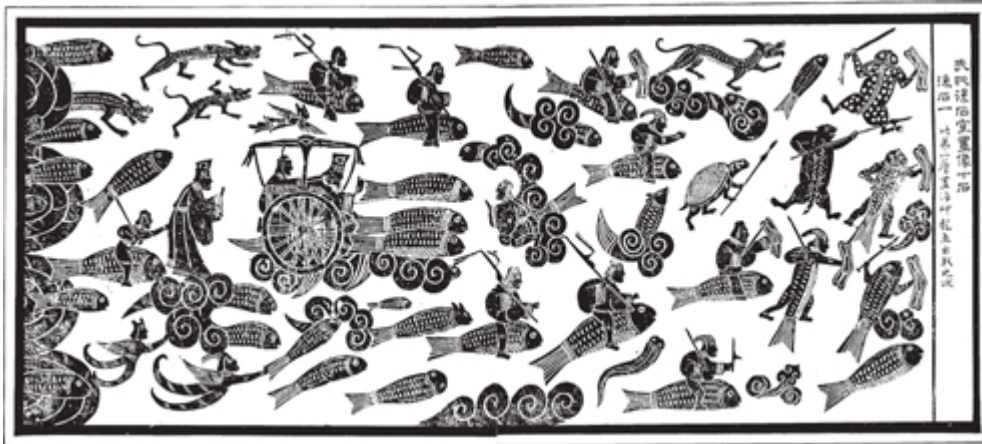
From a Greek bowl. Dionysus Riding on a Fish

In another version the legend relates that Manu embarked with the seven *rishi* and all the different kinds of seeds, and the ark was taken by the fish to the highest mountain of the Himalayas which still bears the name of *Naubandhana*, "The Tying of the Ship." When the fish left the *rishi*, he addressed them with— "I am Brahmā the Creator; there is none greater than I. Through me, as a fish, have ye been delivered from this danger. Through Manu, all beings, demons, and men, all the worlds, both the living and the dead, shall be created. By his hard penance, Manu, through my grace, will acquire the knowledge to create all creatures and he will not err." Having thus spoken, the fish disappeared and Manu created the world.



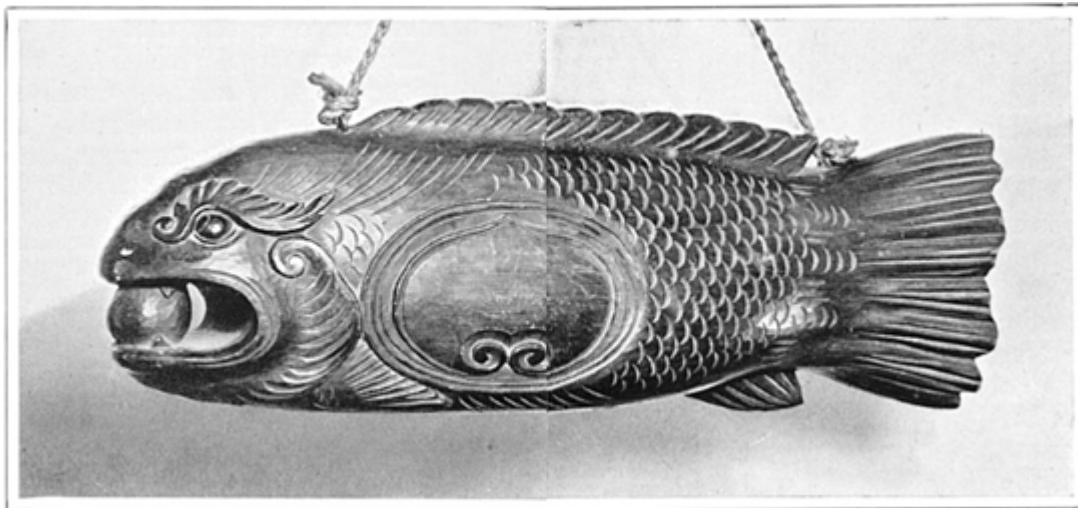
From an ancient Chinese book. *Yu*. A Symbol of Happy Augury

Vishnu is familiarly represented as a man emerging from a fish's mouth, as in the illustration of Matsya, Vishnu's Fish Incarnation. He generally holds in his four hands the conch shell, the disc, the lotus, and the mace, and wears a crown of a seven-hooded serpent. In the most ancient portrayals of the deity he is shown as a mere fish such as appears in the reproduction of a Hindu sculpture entitled "Vishnu's First *Avatār*"



From an ink-rubbing of a The Battle bas-relief of the Han tombs, of the Fishes

Another Hindu deity associated with the fish is Varuna, sometimes described as the god of the heavens, the creator and ruler of the world, and the bestower of rewards and punishments. In the later myths he is restricted to the waters and the regions of the West, and is represented as an old man riding a mythical composite sea-monster known as the *makara*, a creature combining the body and tail of a fish and the legs and head of an antelope.



From a wooden fish. gong. The *Hanteki*

Among the Greeks, Poseidon, the god of the sea and of the watery element, rides a dolphin, while his Roman equivalent Neptune rides a chariot drawn by horses with piscine extremities. Again, Dionysus, Eros, and Orion, the generators and restorers of life, are likewise identified with this steed of the sea. The same is true of Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty and of the cosmic reproductive



powers of nature, as well as her Roman counterpart, Venus who, at birth, is said to have risen full grown from the ocean on a sea shell.



From a wooden incense-holder, closed. The *Kongō Butsu*

The dolphin is the most classic of fish. It not only may be found as a common motive on Greek and Roman coins, but it occupies a place in the Greek zodiac. It was regarded as the special friend of humanity and venerated as the saviour of wrecked ships; hence it was called Philanthropist by the ancients, and no one was permitted to kill or injure it in any way.

Numerous are the legends relating how, during a storm, it would wind itself about the anchor thrown by the seamen and hold it to the ground. One states that when the great bard, Orion, on his way to Corinth, in the seventh century B.C., threw himself into the sea, he was rescued by a dolphin and safely carried to his destination. Another, given in the Homeric hymns, relates that Apollo once took the form of a dolphin and guided the Cretan ships to Crissa, which tale may account for the belief that this species of fish delights in music.



From an ancient Chinese book. *Yü*. A Symbol of Happy Augury

The dolphin, therefore, in addition to being a symbol of maritime power, was also an emblem of a saviour. The sea was compared to the world, and the ship, tossed helplessly about in the storm, to man who—buffeted by the waves of temptation which threatened to engulf him—was rescued by this benevolent creature.

This significance attached to the dolphin may account for its adoption by the Christians to represent the great Nazarene, although the present-day Aquarians claim it was the direct outgrowth of zodiacal influences, since the birth of Jesus occurred at the very time that the sun in its passage through the ecliptic entered the sign of Pisces. In this age occurred the Christian dispensation that took the fish for its symbol of purification and redemption in the rites of baptism, the very font of which was called a piscina. It was also during this time that all forms of navigation were brought to a high degree of efficiency as the direct result of the influence of Pisces, a watery sign.

The early writers of the Church, however, claim that the use of the fish to represent the Saviour was derived from a rebus taken from the Greek word for fish, *ichthys*, the letters of which are interpreted to mean Jesus Christ, God, Son, Saviour. One calls Jesus “The Fisher of Men “; another says, “Christ is figuratively called a fish “; another, “He is the fish that lives in the midst of water “; and still another, “We small fish are like *Ichthys*, our Jesus Christ, born in water and saved only by remaining in water.”

Secular historians maintain, however, that the fish is merely a pagan symbol perpetuated by a new religion. In proof of this, they offer the many examples of the intermingling of the fish with Pan and Orpheus in the epitaphs found in the Christian catacombs.

The eating of fish on Friday, commemorative of Christ’s passion, offers another instance of the survival of a pagan custom. The Romans also ate fish on Friday. It was the day consecrated to Venus, the goddess of fecundity, the fish being held sacred to her on account of its being extraordinarily prolific; and for the same reason the use of fish at connubial feasts is still common.



From a wooden incense-holder, open. The *Kongō Butsu*

The use of the fish symbol, however, undoubtedly had its origin in ancient folk-lore, going back to the beginning of the human race, when man attached great significance to animals and deified them. In any event, it belongs to the oldest of totem animals, being regarded with much mysticism on account of its ability to swim and live beneath the waters.





From a drawing by Hokusai. A Grampus of Yedo Castle

The grampus in Japan, where it is known as *shachi*, so closely resembling the dolphin, symbolizes a warrior, not only on account of its agility in jumping out of the water to great heights, but its fighting propensities, for it is known to attack the great man-eating shark, the *same*, with courageous ferocity. For this reason it has found a place on the palaces of the *Shogun*. The accompanying illustration by Hokusai taken from his FUGAKU HYAK'KEI, "The Hundred Views of Fuji," represents one of the grampuses of the Emperor's palace at Yedo or Tōkyō. The most notable example of this decorative motive of the Land of the Rising Sun, however, is to be found at Nagoya, where such grampuses, known as *Kin no Shachi-hoko*, are not only eight feet and seven inches in length, but are made of solid gold with eyes of silver. They were the gift of Katō Kiyomasa in the year 1610, from which time they have been seen from all parts of the city glittering against the sky. In 1873, however, one of them was sent to the Vienna exhibition and lost in a wreck upon the return voyage, but it was later recovered and restored to its original position, to the delight of all the citizens.



From a triptych by Kuniyoshi. Asahina's Test of Strength

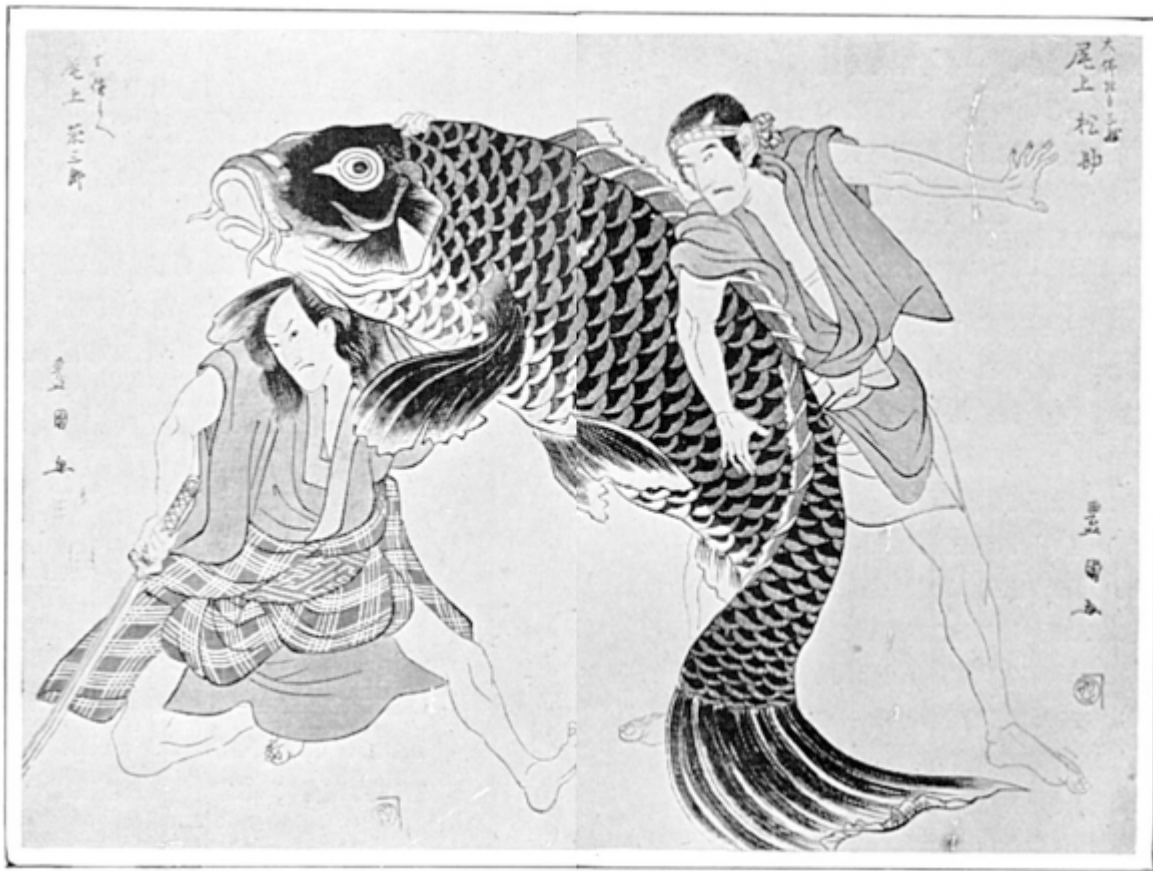
There is a legend associated with these grampuses to the effect that Kakenoki Kinsuke, to win the love of a woman, attempted the theft of one of them by means of a big kite. He did not succeed, but his effort led to the edict that no kite-flying ever again be permitted near the castle.



From a drawing by Hokusai.  
Caught by an Octopus

The grampus is sometimes used to decorate a shrine, but this is mere architectural plagiarism without any significance. It is also at times confused with a mythical creature known as the *gyoryū*, “carp dragon,” as shown in an accompanying illustration, but the latter may easily be distinguished by its dragon legs and claws, in lieu of the grampus’ fins.

Another marine creature that the Japanese delight to depict—generally in some jocular form—is the *tako*, “octopus.” It is regarded as a great table delicacy and very costly, hence the pursuit of fishermen who, sometimes, have the unhappy experience of being caught in its long tentacular arms, as in the illustration by Hokusai, of *Caught by an Octopus*. The great caricaturist, Kyōsai, has, upon several occasions, represented an *ama*, “shell-diver,” in its clutches. This creature grows to a great size in oriental waters, being known to measure as much as thirty feet from end to end of tentacle.



From a coloured woodcut by Toyokuni.  
The Love Struggle

This forbidding marine monster has always been a terror to navigators, although recorded experiences with them are rare. Jules Verne in his *TWENTY THOUSAND LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA* describes one that boarded his submarine *Nautilus*. Yet surpassing fiction is the description of a battle that occurred during a storm between an octopus and one of the ship's crew, on board the "Caronia" that sailed from England some years ago. The storm had washed wave after wave over the deck of the vessel, several times depositing sea substances, when the ship's carpenter, who happened to be alone on deck, found himself suddenly seized, and, looking down, was horrified to see a great devil fish. It had a large grotesque body, in the centre of which was a curious head resembling that of a parrot, with huge, staring, malignant, pupilless eyes, and a mouth that opened and closed rapidly, revealing a sharp tongue covered with teeth. Quick as the dart of a rattlesnake, it shot out its many writhing tentacles, all of which were covered with small, cup-like suckers, accounting for the painful pressing, like so many red-hot irons, on the leg which the monster was holding.





From a porcelain image. The Carp Dragon

He barely had the opportunity of looking at the creature before he became almost blinded by a jet of musky-smelling, inky fluid, which it shot out with almost human intelligence into his very face. Then, tentacle after tentacle, in like manner, successively and with great rapidity, wound itself about the unfortunate's body and, in despair, he imagined himself being drawn into the gaping mouth of the monster, fully realizing that the terrible parrot beak would do him to death. Fortunately, however, his cries brought to him two stalwart sailors who, just in the nick of time, came with formidable weapons and killed the creature.

In the tumult which ensued it seemed almost human, and in its terror of death sent out from its open mouth a furious, hissing noise. Its remains were preserved and presented to one of the Natural History Museums of the Empire.

The inky fluid which is secreted by all species of the octopus is their means of offence and defence, to form a screen between them and their opponents.

There is also a *matsuri*, "village festival," known as the *Hama-ondo*, which, in some of the colour prints of the Ukiyo-ye school, is depicted by a group of young people singing and dancing about a great basket of fish, prominent among which is the great-eyed *toko*.

The octopus, however, is not the only marine animal that reaches an immense size, judging from the sharks pictured in the triptych by Kuniyoshi, of "Asahina's Test of Strength."

Asahina Saburō is the celebrated strong man and warrior of Japan, who is noted for a number of extraordinary adventures. One was his descent into the under-world, where he browbeat the formidable old hag, Shōzuka no Baba, of the Sanzu-gawa, “River of the Three Paths,” to effect a passage. After overcoming the ruler, Emma-Ō, and his demon hordes, he participated in their contests of *kubibiki*, “a test-of-strength sport,” similar to the occidental tug-of-war. In *kubibiki*, however, instead of a number of contestants pulling with their hands in opposite directions at a rope, only two pull with their necks, about which the rope has been fastened.

Asahina also paid a visit to Kikai-ga-shima, “Devil’s Island,” where he likewise defeated and subjugated the *oni*. Then, later, on a cruise in Chinese waters with *Shōgun* Sanetomo, he showed great prowess by swimming with a shark under each arm. He also surprised a hunting party of Yoritomo’s retainers by lifting a rock seven feet long and hurling it over a precipice into the sea. And, at the battle of Hikone (1180), he uprooted with naught but his hands a huge tree trunk and used it as a war club.

In Kuniyoshi’s composition he is killing sharks with his bare hands, to the astonishment of the *Shogun* and his attendant, who are watching the contest from a safe distance in the background.

The illustration by Toyokuni entitled “The Love Struggle” offers another example of the homophone, *koi*, applicable to “carp” and “love” as given in the preceding chapter. In this instance the artist has used a great fish to represent the contest of two rivals for the love of the same woman.

The fish is quite a common motive in the art of the ancient Americans—the Peruvians, the Mayas, the Toltecs, the Aztecs, and the Mexicans—but regarding its symbolic significance both literature and tradition are non-committal.

In Egypt and among the Semitic races this creature of the deep had a phallic import due, as has already been stated, to its relation to fertility, fecundity, and reproduction.

In China it is the symbol of abundance, again derived from a homophone, in which the two characters for “fish” and “abundance” have the sound of *yü*. But apart from this, the fish, when wrought in jade and other semi-precious stones, is significant of rank and power. It is commonly represented in pairs, as one of the Eight Emblems of Happy Augury, herewith illustrated. It does not, however, occur in the duodenary cycle of animals used by both China and Japan.

These twain fishes have the additional significance of connubial felicity, due to their habit of swimming in pairs, the chief example of which is the tradition that two of gold swim the ocean between the parts of the great division at Mount Sumêru. This motive has therefore come to be regarded as a symbol of the harmony which should exist not only between husband and wife and between two friends but between an individual and his home, expressed by the Chinese in the phrase *Yü shiu hsiang ho*, “The mutual harmony of the fish and the water.” This signification offers an explanation for the extensive use of the fishes found wrought in every precious material.

With the Buddhists, the twin fishes are found in Japan among the Seven Appearances, which symbolize “freedom from restraint.” They claim that, as a fish moves unhampered on the waters in all directions, so in the Buddha state the fully emancipated from all desires and attachments encounter no obstacles.

The fish also appears in Buddhist temples, both in China and Japan, in the shapes of drums and gongs. In Japan these objects are known as the *mokagyo* and the *hanteki*, the former being used by the *Shingon* sect to assemble novitiates to the communion service, and the latter by the *Zen* sect, not only for chanting during religious services, but also during the *Cha no yu*, “Tea Ceremony,” which is always regarded as a sacred occasion.

The *Kongō Butsu* of a given illustration is an incense-holder made in the form of a *mokugyo*. When open it reveals, as shown in another illustration, elaborate carvings which include clouds, the sacred *hō-ō*, and images of Buddha with Monju and Fugên accompanied by two attendants, Kongara and Seitaka.

The use of the fish for this drum is accounted for in the following legend: A monk, failing to perform his religious duties, was punished by being transformed into a fish and thrown into the water. While there, a tree grew from his back causing him much distress. In revenge, the fish tried to upset the boat in which his former instructor was crossing the stream and, when questioned about his act,

replied, "You are responsible for my condition, for you failed to instruct me in *the Dharma*." Thereupon the monk replied, "You were too indolent to give attention." After much discussion, the fish was convinced of his error and, succumbing to the inevitable, became converted and was relieved by death. The monk then cut the tree away from the fish's body and made it into a drum to be a reminder to all who should fail in their religious obligations.

Another reason given for making a drum and a gong in this shape is that the fish never closes its eyes, therefore those who embrace the faith must abandon all sleep by night as well as day if they wish to reach the path of perfection.

From the dawn of human intelligence the fish has been portrayed either as a means of representing some element associated with it or for the magical purpose of averting evil. It is found in graphic representations as remote as the Caverne de Larthet at Lourdes of the Palaeolithic period, where, associated with the deer, it is intended to convey the idea of a stream through which the animals are passing. This habit of scattering fish over a vacant space to suggest water is common not only to all primitive peoples but also to nations advanced in the arts, as shown in the accompanying illustrations of Apollo Flying Over the Ocean, and Dionysus Riding on a Fish, as well as the naïve and powerful Chinese composition of The Battle of the Fishes, the significance of which is still without a convincing explanation.

The ancient American designs herewith shown, the Mayan and the two Peruvian patterns of counter-change, represent this sea emblem, not in what is generally alleged a primitive art, but in one which has matured into the conventions of finality which ever mark the prime of a people.

But how wide the gulf between the art of these ancient peoples who have bequeathed to the world the wonders of Mitla, Chichen Itza, Quirigua, Palenqua, and Uxmal and that of the paintings by Ōkyo of the preceding chapter. The two are antipodal to each other; one, not a degeneration as one writer puts it, but a progression evolved through the intelligent elimination of non-essentials to symbolic types of pure design; the other, a most excellent example of naturalistic representation of piscine life portrayed in terms of impressionistic rendering and organic composition. The former is an art of the chisel developed from the very limitations of the tool and the resisting substance upon which it works, while the latter is an art of the brush and a pigment, neither of which knows any restrictions. One is an expression of the life of an early race of so low a spiritual sense that it practised human sacrifice, while the other is a faint reflection of the compassion and the love "that seeketh not its own," so fervently taught by the gentle and lowly Buddha.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE CRANE

*A silvery beach  
With glittering waves of foam,  
A lone majestic crane  
With eyes intent thereon.  
A glowing disc  
Against the evening shy  
Crossed by this regal bird  
In anxious homeward flight.  
A lofty pine  
Untouched by winter snows  
Sheltering, for this noble one,  
A nest of airy young.*



From a painting by Chiura

OF all the decorative motives that adorn the wares of the Orient none lends itself with greater charm than the crane, for its beauty, combined with its stately grace, has for centuries commanded universal admiration in the regions which it has favoured with its presence.

Next to *the fêng-huang*, “phoenix,” and its associates the *luan* and *yüan*, it is the most distinguished bird of oriental lore. In China, where it had been given the title of “The Patriarch of the Feathered Tribes,” it was known as the *ho*, sometimes written *hoh* and *hok*, and endowed with many mythical attributes, chief of which was longevity. It was not only credited with living to a fabulous age, but when it reached its six hundredth year, it was able to subsist exclusively upon water, and, when two thousand years old, its white plumage changed to black. It has always been regarded as a bird of auspicious import, principally due to a homophone; for the character by which it is written in many of the languages of the empire has the same sound as have the characters for happiness and prosperity.

Among the numerous complicated charms which the Chinese believed radiated magical essences, those symbolizing longevity were the most conspicuous. But this idea of long life—which was held as

one of the Five Happinesses—was not merely physical life, but life immortal and eternal, or life beyond the grave.

In order, then, to insure the coveted blessings which these magical symbols might confer, they were made a potent factor in the decoration, not only of objects of general utility but of what were known as grave clothes.

One robe in particular, upon which much thought has been lavished, is a long silken blue gown completely covered with an all-over pattern in which the character *shou*, significant of longevity, has been embroidered in gold.

Other longevity symbols include the stag, the tortoise, the peach, and the fungus, all of which, combined with the crane, are commonly found on the various articles provided for burial. All garments of this character, quite curiously, were worn by elderly people during their lifetime in order that they might absorb some of the vitality which these symbols are believed to possess.

The crane was thought by the Taoists to be one of the aerial coursers of the immortals and, when so shown, frequently carried in its beak the “rod of faith” or the “sacred fungus.” As such, it also not only conveys departed souls to the Western Heavens, but brings celestial beings back to earth. For this reason, it is undoubtedly so constantly found as the companion of the *hsien-nung*, the mountain recluses who, through the practices of austerity or alchemy, have succeeded in freeing themselves from all the taints of the flesh.



From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige.

Chinese literature abounds with tales of sages, scholars, officials, even monarchs, who associated themselves with this fowl of the air, some finding it useful as a steed, others as a companion, and still others as a form for transformation. But the particular *rishi* which painters have represented is Wang Tzū-chiao, known to the Japanese as Ōshikyō, who is ever shown riding the crane through the clouds.





From a coloured woodcut by Toyohiro. The *Shogun* Yoritomo Freeing the Cranes

In Japan, the crane, known as *tsuru* and familiarly referred to as *Ō Tsuru Sama*, “Honourable Lord Crane,” not only enjoys all the significance bestowed upon it in China, but likewise is endowed by the people of the Island Kingdom with additional qualities pertaining to its beauty and character.



From a coloured woodcut. The Hundred Cranes

Three distinct varieties of the bird have been known in this country, but the one which is generally portrayed in art is characterized by a snow-white plumage, relieved by black on the under neck, black tail feathers and a red crown. It is generally spoken of as the Manchurian variety.





From a gold brocade. Honourable Lord Crane

Unlike its European relative, the stork, which usually nests on buildings—the crane of the Orient breeds in the lofty trees which grow above a forest. Both are conspicuous for their beauty, whether they stalk with quiet dignity through a green meadow or along an ocean beach; or gravely rest on one leg among the tall grasses of some stream; or again sweep aloft from some ancient pine to circle in a slow majestic flight to still greater heights.

But now, except in regions remote from civilization, the beautiful *tsuru* is rarely seen, except in the great parks or some nobleman's garden; for, since the Restoration, the Imperial protection which it enjoyed under the former régime no longer exists. In the days of feudalism, no one was allowed to molest it in any way nor hunt it without permission from the Emperor, as it was ever reserved for his own pleasure and use. Hence the great throngs of these feathered visitants which migrated from the colder countries for the winter, distributing themselves over the entire Empire, not only found lodgment in the forest wilds, but built their nests in trees that overshadowed the very homes of the people. And, not infrequently, they came with their broods of young, which they fearlessly installed upon the premises, and there remained until the summer heat drove them back to their northern homes; for they always were treated with the greatest kindness and consideration, their arrival being welcomed as prophetic of good fortune.



From a painting by Kōrin

In those days, tradition relates, it was not an uncommon sight to see the air filled with these majestic birds, their white and black plumage contrasting beautifully against the blue sky, producing a natural picture, similar to the accompanying illustration entitled “The Hundred Cranes” which, while unsigned, is probably of the Hokusai school. And so tame were these majestic creatures that they were quite apt to alight beside some pedestrian and peck at his clothing.

One of the best known episodes related of this great and mighty bird was the “Freeing of the Cranes” by the *Shogun*, Yoritomo, at Shichi-ri-ga-hama, a noted beach midway between Enoshima and Kamakura. In this most favoured amusement, the ruler combined his pleasure with his religion; for the setting free of animals was one of the means by which a Buddhist sought to acquire merit.

For this event the people brought cranes from all directions as longevity offerings to express their felicitations. But before the *Shogun* liberated them, date-bearing metal tags were attached to their feet to act as an aid in determining their age should they be recaptured. It is claimed that some of these very birds were found several centuries after Yoritomo’s death, proving them to be capable of attaining great length of life.

In the accompanying illustration by Toyohiro, Yoritomo is shown under a great umbrella, held by a female attendant. The substitution of women figures for those of the men was quite common to most of the Ukiyo-ye designers in order to please the courtesans who were the principal buyers of the coloured woodcuts. Back of the *Shogun* a crane is being brought for presentation, while in front of him another complacently awaits the ceremony which is to give it the opportunity of joining its mates which so beautifully pattern the sky. The sacred site of this scene is suggested by the single upright beam of a *tori-i* at the left of the picture, the significance of which is enhanced by the pine branches beyond. Then, above the graceful cloud mass, lies the mainland with the peerless Fuji no Yama rising majestically against the sky and forming a fitting background for soaring *tsuru*.



From a painting by Okyo. The Crane's Nestlings

This most beautiful composition by the teacher of the now popular Hiroshige is unquestionably the best example of the representation of this subject to be found among *nishike-ye*, "brocade pictures," or colour prints.





From a coloured woodcut by Harunobu. Her Love-letter

A place celebrated in connection with the crane is Waka no ura, in the neighbourhood of Ōsaka, a sandy peninsula enclosing a small bay studded with islands. Here, in the days of the Empire, this picturesque bird dwelt in great numbers in the branches of fantastic pines, the joy of the people and the inspiration of many a poem. The following by Akahito (A.D. 724–748) is quite commonly known :



From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. The *Shimadai*

On the shores of Waka  
When the tide comes flowing in  
There being no dry land,  
Towards the reedy place  
The cranes fly across crying.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. One Line Sketches

But now to see such an entrancing sight it would be necessary to go to Korea where these birds still linger in great numbers. In Japan, they have either been killed or frightened away; and the pines of Waka no ura also are gone. These likewise, no longer being protected by the immemorial decree, fell victims to the peasantry. For, in some way, they conceived the idea that the trees were a menace to the fields beyond, not realizing the value of the pines in screening their crops from the salt sea spray.





From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige. Crane on Wave

Waka no ura is therefore only a beautiful memory which may be compared with the fabulous *Hōraizan*, “The Sacred Mountain of the Immortals”—the Japanese adaptation of *Feng Lai Shan*, “The Taoist Paradise of the West.” On these ethereal heights, tradition relates, did abide the genii, beings who quaff the Fountain of Life and subsist exclusively upon the Peach of Immortality and the Sacred Fungus. Here, likewise, grow the pine, the bamboo, and the plum, as well as the gem-bearing trees of coral, jade, and other precious stones, and under which, over fields of gold and silver, roam the spotted deer, the long-tailed tortoise, and the white crane.

From this conception of *Hōraizan* is derived the idea of the *Hōrajima*, “Happy Island,” also called the *Shimadai*, “Island Support,” which is used at all wedding ceremonies. This generally consists of a small stand holding a group of rocks from which grow the three happy trees, the pine, bamboo, and plum, collectively known as *shō-chiku-bai*, while beneath them are placed small images of the crane and tortoise. Another form of *shimadai*—as shown in the accompanying illustration by Kuniyoshi—represents the legend of *Takasago*. On this, under a bifurcated old pine tree, two vénérables, Jo and Uba, the spirits of the pine trees of Takasago and Sumiyoshi, are shown sweeping and raking up the pine needles, while the other happy pair, the crane and the tortoise, wander happily about.



From a woodcut by Koryōsai. A Beauty as Jurōjin

*Takasago* symbolizes a happy wedded life, whether it finds expression in the representation of the *shimadai* or in the poem *Takasago no utai*, which, likewise, is recited at a marriage.



From a coloured woodcut by Keisai Yeisen. Going to *Hōraizan*

The romance of this myth is as follows: Uba was a maiden of Takasago whom a son of Izanagi, “the creator of the sun and moon, the world and all things that appertain thereto,” loved and wed. They lived to a very great age and, dying at the same moment, their spirits entered the tree where they still abide. But on moonlight nights they reappear in human form at the scene of their earthly felicity and continue their former occupation of gathering the pine needles. The purpose of the *shimadai* is to suggest that the young couple, who are to be united for life, should emulate Jō and Uba, whose conjugal felicity lasted so many years.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. One Line Sketches

The crane and tortoise, known as *tsuru to kame*, are ever in evidence at weddings, where they are found, not only as decorative motifs on objects associated with the ceremony, but in all the expressions of felicitation offered to the newly wed, such as *Tsuru sennin, kame mannen*, “Crane a thousand, tortoise ten thousand,” significant of the length of time the happy life may continue.

The crane, in particular, seems to have been attractive to the bride, for it is so commonly seen on her attire. This association is quite apparent in the accompanying illustration by Harunobu of “Her Love-Letter” which, in this case, may be regarded as a proposal. For, since the crane is supposed to carry souls to paradise, it may quite reasonably be inferred that her marriage is to be made in heaven, whither this aerial courser is carrying her.



From a coloured woodcut by Hokusai. Cranes and Young Pines

The crane is further related to womankind, since it is ever commended as an example of motherhood to be emulated. In this respect it is like the pheasant which is said to stay by her young during a grass fire, covering them with her outstretched wings until, together, they perish in the flames. In a similar way, the crane shields her young from the bitter cold of the winter snows. In like manner, the human mother is instructed to guard her child when overtaken by catastrophes of earthquake, flood, or fire.





From a woodcut signed Isshō Shij in. Jurōjin

Another version of this comparison is expressed in the proverb *Yoke no no kigisu yoru no tsuru*, which translated means, “After a fire had swept the moor the mother pheasant mournfully seeks her offspring just as the mother crane, after a day’s absence in search of food, returns solicitously to her brood at night.” Hence the subject of *Tsuru no sugomori*, “The confinement of the crane to her nest,” as represented in the illustration by Okyo, is a popular theme with painters, poets, and musicians.

In the illustration entitled “Going to *Hōraizan*” is shown one of the Seven Gods of Happiness who is known by the euphonious name of *Fukurokujiu*. He, like his companion of the opposite page, is reading a manuscript which, probably, is a Taoist text. Being the god of longevity, he may be preparing to meet the immortals of the sacred mountain, whither he appears to be speeding.

In the representations of the Seven Gods of Happiness, the crane and tortoise are invariably shown, for they, as well as the spotted deer, are the attributes of Jurōjin, the god of knowledge, herewith given in the illustration signed *Isshō Shijin*, which means Master of Design.

In the adjoining illustration by Koryūsai, the same deity is impersonated by a beauty, for reasons previously given. Her *kimono* bears the character for longevity and, while the spotted deer is not shown, the crane’s companion may be seen on the ground to the right of the lady.

The only legend in which both the crane and tortoise take a part is that of Urashima given in [Chapter VII](#). It is a tale designed to teach the dual lessons of kindness to animals and filial piety, both

of which are known to every schoolchild of the Hermit Kingdom.

*Tsuru to kame*, with its happy significance, is ever a popular theme for congratulatory messages as well as for decorations for joyful occasions.

Then, in combination with *shō-chiku-bai*, “pine, bamboo, and plum,” it frequently appears in attractive *surimono* form, or as the decoration of a *fukusa*, and, like the *tsuru no sugomori*, it is also used for musical compositions.

In art it finds its greatest expression in representations of the Mountain of the Immortals, where, in multitudes, it is shown perching on the branches of ancient pines or flying about the lurid sun, while hordes of tortoises are portrayed crowding the rocks and surrounding waters. But its most familiar representation, whether appearing on a *kakemono* or as a mere decoration, is generally in combination with the pine and the sun—the three emblems of longevity, in which the crane symbolizes length of years, the pine, evergreen existence, and the sun, everlasting life.



From a coloured woodcut by Keisai Yeisen. Homeward

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE FALCON

*His hunting days now done,  
The fierce hawk calmly contemplates  
The gently setting sun.*

ENSHI.



From a painting by Chiura

THE falcon in China, as well as in Japan, has for centuries been a popular theme for sculptors and painters. It has always been regarded as a symbol of courage, power, and heroism, not only on account of its being the possessor of these enviable qualities, but because its name, both in China as *ying* and in Japan as *talca*, is a homophone of the word which signifies "heroic."

The word falcon in correct usage applies only to the female of the species of the hawk family, which, from time immemorial, particularly with the races of the Old World, has not only been a valuable aid to man in supplying him with animal food, but has brought him also much pleasure in the field of sports.

The ancient records of China give accounts of falconry as early as 2000 B.C., but in Japan it was unknown until A.D. 355, when a falcon was sent as a gift to the Emperor by the King of Korea, in whose country the art had long been practised, and where it still may be found in its simplified form.

In Europe it was unknown until introduced into Italy by the Lombards about A.D. 560. Several centuries later, it migrated to other countries and was used by all classes of society either for utility or sport. The Crusaders learned about it in the Orient, and brought back with them both falcons and their trainers. In a short time it became the fashion of the courts and was indulged in by kings, nobles, and ladies. Each participant in a tournament carried a falcon on his wrist, a particular species being assigned according to his rank. In England, royalty carried the gersfalcon; an earl, the peregrine; a yeoman, the goshawk; a priest, the sparrow hawk; and a servant, the kestrel; while the interest of the war lords in this sport was so great that they took their falconers on every expedition and flew their birds at every chance game.

In the seventeenth century the sport declined, but was revived in the eighteenth, when the art of shooting birds on the wing became prevalent. In modern times it has been maintained almost exclusively by sporting clubs, on account of the difficulty of securing trained falconers as well as the expense of keeping the birds.



From a woodcut by Morikuni

In China, falconry, known as *fang ying*, was a popular amusement of the emperors and their courts during successive dynasties. The Mongol monarchs, in particular, were devoted to it, for, according to Marco Polo, Kublai Khan employed for his hawking excursions no less than seventy thousand men, who carried not only falcons, but eagles, kites, and other birds of prey which had been taught to pursue their quarry. Again, it is related that two monarchs, K'ang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung, of the great Ch'ing dynasty, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, utilized this sport to promote warlike habits among their subjects by making frequent hunting expeditions beyond the Great Wall.

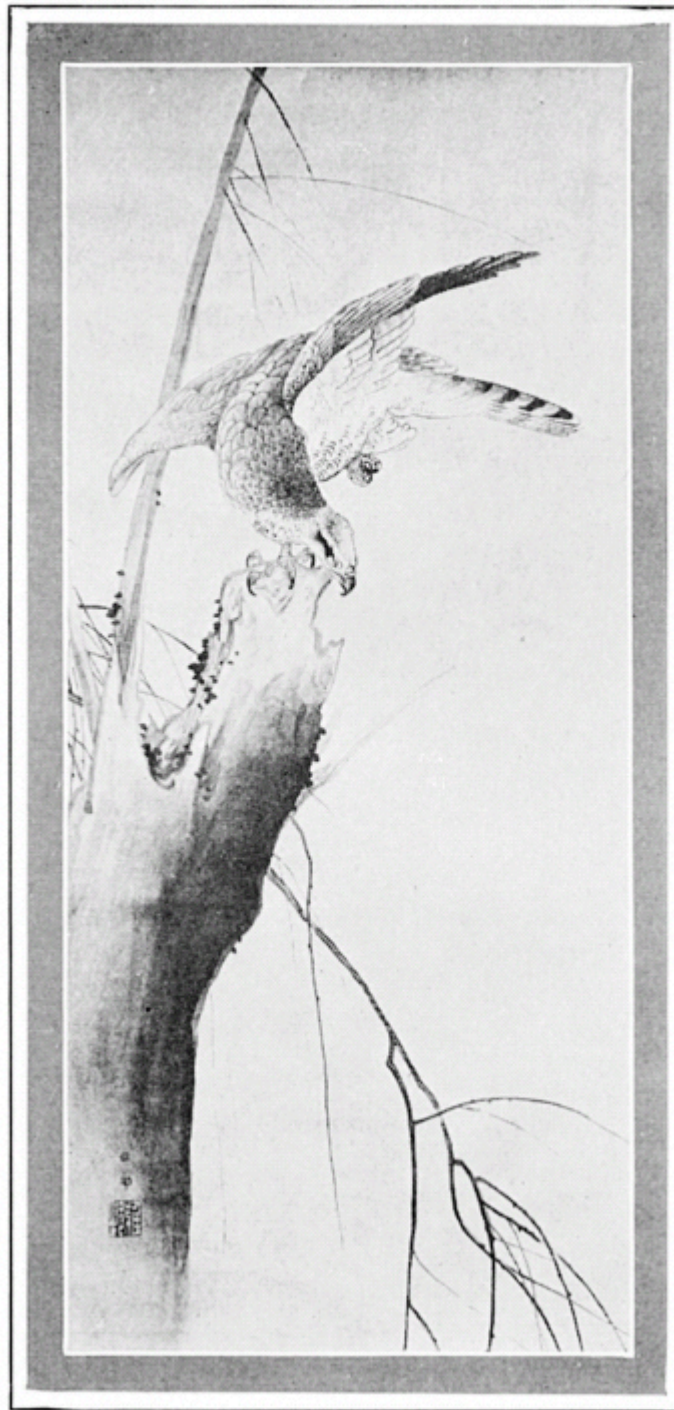




From a coloured, woodcut by Hiroshige

A rather amusing parody on this so-called noble art is the pun which the Chinese make in connection with one of the problems of domestic life. It is said that when a man and his wife have difficulty in making a living, they go a-begging. Then, when an opportunity presents itself, the man sells the wife, claiming her to be his sister. He assumes to be much distressed at being obliged to resort to this act, and the wife, in turn, also is tearful but assents. The man then departs with the money and in a few days the wife steals all she can carry from her new master and runs back to her spouse. This, which is not an unusual occurrence, is known as falconing with a woman, since, as his wife, she was said to be strapped to his wrist, released upon the sight of game, and speedily drawn back by the jesses upon its capture.





From a painting by Gahō Hashimoto

In Japan, hawking was known as *tahagari*. It was at its height during the Tokugawa era, due to the impetus given it by Ieyasu, the first *shōgun*, and was always guarded as a privilege of rank. As in China, hunting expeditions were made into the wilds to promote a warlike spirit among the people. The boar, bear, deer, and similar animals were hunted in the region surrounding Fuji no yama, and the game birds in the mountains and dense forests, particularly of the Imperial reserves. Tajima, on the south coast of the Inland Sea, was especially noted for the cranes which flocked there in great numbers to nest in the dense forests; and even to-day, although this aerial visitor has almost departed, a few still may be found in this region of their former playground.



From a coloured Hokusai. woodcut by The Ōdori

The *tahagari* generally occurred during the winter when the ground was covered with snow, for this was not only the season of the crane's migration from the colder north, but the one when the falcons also were in their best condition for the hunt. These excursions were most elaborate and imposing, for accompanying the large number of sportsmen who travelled in great magnificence were generally an equal number of falconers, each of whom gave his entire time to the care of a single bird. When the hunt was on, the falcons, hooded, were carried to the field on the wrists of their keepers or their masters and, when the quarry was sighted, were unhooded and released from the jesses. Each, with penetrating eye, made a straight and steady swoop to the prey, fastening its cruel talons into the legs of its chosen victim and beating it unmercifully with its formidable wings until the poor creature was borne by its assailant to the ground. Thereupon, the falconer flew to his charge to release and protect it from any injury that might be inflicted by its unfortunate victim. When there was a scarcity of wild-fowl in the accustomed haunts, cranes, captured in various parts of the country, were carried there in wicker cages, or on poles to which they were tied by their wings. Then, at the opportune moment, they were liberated to be flown at by the falcons, the sole purpose being to provide amusement for the nobles, a performance hardly consistent with the lofty tenets of *Bushidō* and the native faiths.



From a coloured woodcut by Hichō

Upon these occasions, the game thus captured was utilized for feasting and, notwithstanding the high regard in which this lordly creature, *O Tsuru Sama*, was held, it was made into a soup for the enjoyment of these sportsmen, who not only regarded it as a most savoury dish but one which was believed to be efficacious in bestowing upon all who partook of it the potentiality of the longevity possessed by the bird.



From a woodcut by Morikuni

The hawk used for this sport was the product of the most careful rearing. Taken from the nest of its wild parents, it was practically brought up by hand by a professional trainer who bestowed upon it every attention. Bathed and brushed perpetually, its bill and talons pared and polished, it was preened until its plumage, whether of the rare white variety or the usual speckled brown, glistened in iridescence.





From a coloured woodcut by Harunobu

So highly regarded were these beautiful birds that their owners, eager to display them, held falcon shows where they were compared and their points of excellence examined in competition for prizes.





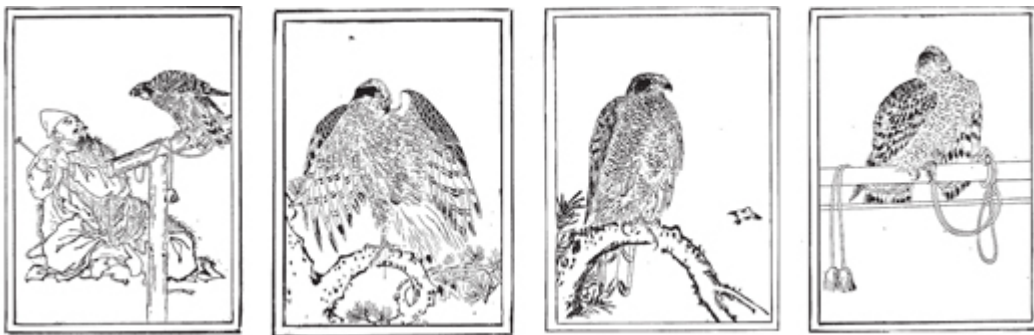
From a painting by Hisanobu

Falconry passed away with the *shōgunate*, due not only to the advent of the gun, as in Europe, but to the unsettled condition of the country, which made the expense of such a luxury prohibitive. However, there still remain in Tokyo and elsewhere enclosures laid out for the preservation of wild duck, where the last representation of the famous stock of trained falcons may still be seen.

In art, the falcon shares with the horse the privilege of portraiture rarely accorded to other animals, this bird of the East being regarded with as much favour as is the well-bred steed of the West esteemed for its beauty, intelligence, and power. That so small a creature could vanquish another, such as a crane, which is twice its size, or even more so, through the keenness of its vision, the swiftness of its flight, the force of its wings, and the sharpness of its beak and talons, as well as respond intelligently to training, naturally commanded the highest of human admiration. It is then not surprising that its owner should wish to perpetuate its memory and preserve its likeness by having its portrait painted. Hence, no collection of paintings in China or Japan is complete without such a representation, and since the great est of artists of all times were drawn into this service, some of these portraits are of rare and exceptional beauty.



From a coloured woodcut by Hiroshige



From woodcuts by Kyōsai taken from the

The most celebrated Chinese painting of this character, now extant, is that of “The White Falcon” owned by the British Museum. It is without seal or signature, but is attributed to the great artist Emperor, Hui Tsung of the Sung dynasty, and while its authenticity has been challenged, it is unquestionably a beautiful piece of brush-work done in a simple and masterly style. Copies of this beautiful painting abound in great numbers, some of which may be found in both Europe and America; for the modern Chinese are most clever in adding seals and signatures where they may enhance the purchasing value of a painting.



From a coloured woodcut by Gekkō

Hui Tsung was not only a clever painter, specializing in eagles, hawks, and other birds, but he was a renowned patron of art, establishing an Imperial academy of calligraphy and painting. He was also a great collector of antiquities and art objects which, when his dynasty fell, were dispersed.

In Giles' *HISTORY OF CHINESE PICTORIAL ART* is shown a very beautiful composition of an eagle which the author attributes to Lin Liang, one of the greatest artists of the Ming dynasty. It is quite representative of the simplicity, power, and carrying quality which ever mark the best of Chinese pictorial art.



From a coloured woodcut by Harunobu

In Japan such painting of the falcon was even more popular than in China, as a study of the great collections would undoubtedly reveal; for every celebrated artist tried his brush at it, while some, especially those of the Shijō and Tosa schools, were noted for their delineations of this favoured bird.

In the Japanese publication, KOKKA, several are shown, among which is one by Sesshū in the best style of this prince among painters, and another by Ōkyo, the founder of the Maruyama school.

The British Museum lists three in its catalogue, one of which, "A White Falcon," by Hisanobu, an artist of the eighteenth century, is herewith shown. The Boston Museum of Fine Arts owns one of the Ashikaga period (1338–1573) entitled "A Falcon on a Rock," which is very beautiful.



EHON TAKA. KAGAMI, "Mirror of Hawks"

In *EPOCHS OF CHINESE AND JAPANESE ART* by Fenollosa, two interesting examples by Soga Jasoku are shown; and another, entitled "The Painting of an Eagle," by Kano Utanosuke, a brother of Kanō Motonobu, of the sixteenth century. The latter, the author says, is not only the greatest work of this artist but the most powerful bird painting in the world. To quote him further: "It most fully exemplifies the *Zen* ideal of a bird whose majesty makes us think instinctively of great human qualities. It would hardly be too much to say that it, seems to be a Buddha among birds." In the study of this painting the words of Margaret Coulson Walker's *BIRD LIFE* are called to mind. "The king of birds, which is exalted above all the feathered tribes . . . that unflinchingly gazes into the lurid sun, or from a solitary bough defies the warring elements of the storm . . . that with utmost ease can mount the heights beyond mortal vision until lost in the azure depths."

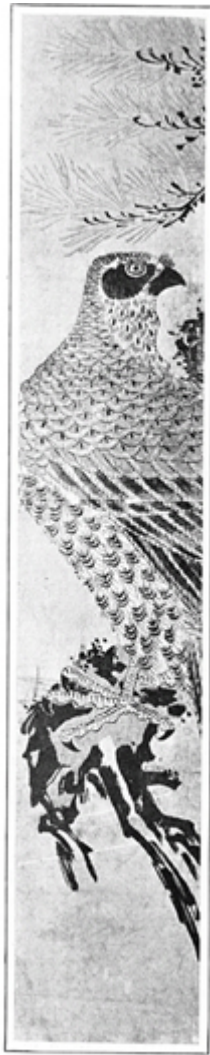
Another of the accompanying illustrations gives a representation of a falcon by Gahō Hashimoto, who died as recently as 1907, and of whom the poet and art critic, Yone Noguchi, says, "He was the sum-total of the best of Japan's art." Again, the fourth and fifth of the line drawings by Kyōsai herewith shown are reproductions of screen paintings by Sanraku, another of Japan's great artists.





From an embroidery for a *fukusa*

Many of the designers for wood-block printing also tried their skill on this subject, examples of which are given in the illustrations by Kiyomasu, Harunobu, Hokusai, Hiroshige, and Hichō. These artists combine the falcon with the pine and the sun, investing the three elements of the composition with important significance; for, while the pine and the sun are closely related to the life and habitat of the bird, the association is, in reality, based upon the symbology of each, the sun being regarded as the source from which the falcon ever renews its youth and perpetuates its longevity, and the pine as an emblem of evergreen existence. Sometimes the pine is displaced by the plum as in the illustration by Hichō. Again, the Ukiyo-ye designers, like the painters of the regular schools, represent the eagle and hawk on a mountain crag or in front of a waterfall.



From a coloured woodcut by Kiyomasu



From a triptych by Utamaro. The New Year's Outing

Scenes connected with the natural hunt of the falcon, as well as with the sport, also find favour with the *nishike-ye* designers, such as the capture of a mother monkey, as illustrated by Harunobu; or the attack of the wild goose by a falcon as depicted in the *fukusa*; or the bringing down of the crane by the hawk as shown in the woodcut by Gekkō; and the line drawings by Kyōsai. The latter are taken from a series of drawings entitled EHON TAKA KAGAMI, which includes every incident connected with the sport. They range from scenes of “sighting the quarry,” through “the flight toward it,” “the attack,” “the struggle,” and “the final tragedy,” or better, “the escape” of the poor crane. The third drawing of this group represents the subject of *Nukume Dori*, “The Warming Bird,” which is designed to convey the idea of generosity and gratitude on the part of this bird of prey. There is a tradition that after the falcon has spent the day hunting, in order to keep its feet warm, it captures a small bird which it holds in its claws the entire night, but always releases it in the morning, unhurt. The illustration shows the little bird winging a safe retreat.

Unhappy subjects, however, are never painted by the members of the regular schools, the more tutored artists holding that the only function of art is the expression of ideas of the poetical, the picturesque, and the beautiful, or, in the words of the proverb: “*Shi wa yusei no, gwa wa musei no shi*” “A poem is a picture with a voice, and a picture is a voiceless poem.”



From a coloured woodcut by Harunobu. The Young *Samurai*

A favourite subject of the Ukiyo-ye school associated with the hawk is “The New Year’s Outing” as shown by Utamaro, in an accompanying illustration. This is generally represented by an outdoor scene, with the sacred mountain in the background, and a family of young people enjoying a holiday.

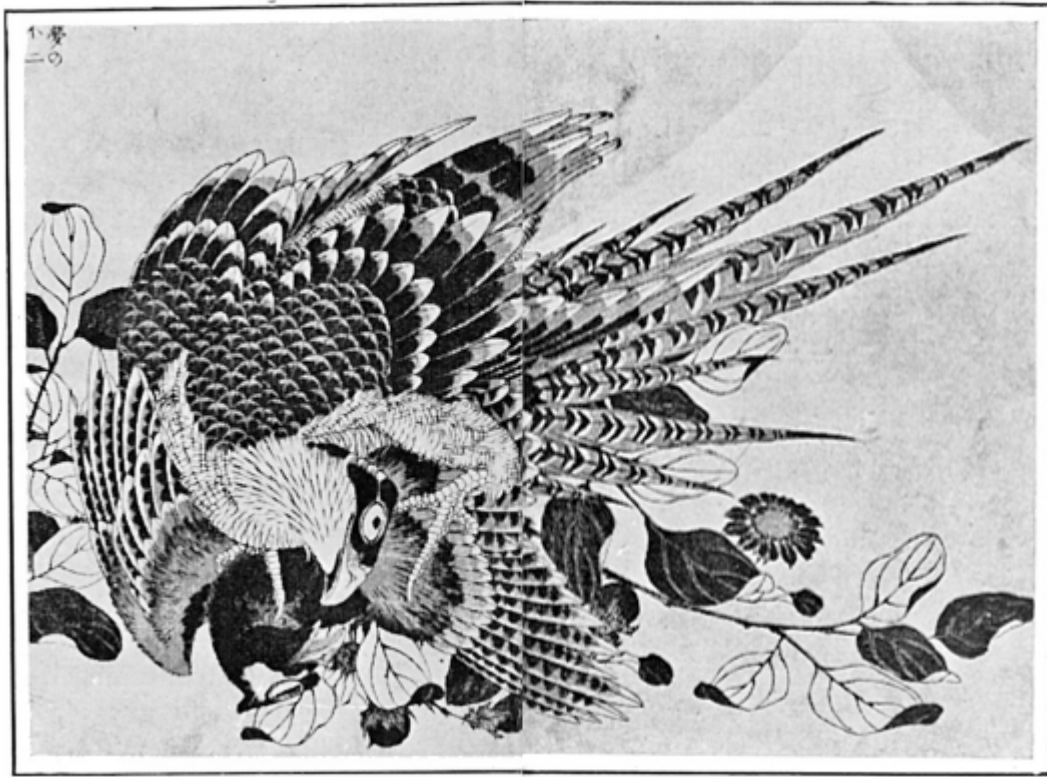
A young *samurai* always holds the *taka* on his wrist, and a servant conspicuously offers a basket of egg-plants for sale. This picture is intended to represent what is known as the *San puku*, “Three lucky things,” namely: *Ichi Fuji, ni taka, san nasubi*, “First, Fuji no yama; second, the falcon; third, the egg-plants.”



From an *Otsu-ye. Fuji Musume*

The origin of this singular combination is attributed to Ieyasu—before referred to as the founder of the Tokugawa line of *shoguns* (1542–1616)—as it represented three things which he highly prized: Fuji no yama, which he constantly saw from his palace in Suruga, he sincerely loved; the hawk, for he was exceedingly fond of the chase and popularized falconry; the egg-plant, which he regarded with deep feeling, for in the early part of his career it was the means of saving him from starvation. He had been obliged to flee, following a defeat in battle, and took refuge in the hut of a poor farmer, who could give him nothing to eat except an egg-plant.





From a woodcut by Hoku-Lucky sai. *San puku*, “Three Things”



From a triptych by Kuniyoshi. Matabei Painting *Ōtsu-ye*

In the *San puku*—which is shown in the beautiful illustration by Hokusai—the mountain symbolizes the beauty of nature; the falcon, the delights of the chase, and the egg-plant, the simplicity of life as attained by economy and frugality. These three things are closely associated with the New Year in this way: On the eve of this great annual festival, a small print of the *Shichi-fukujin* is placed in the drawer of the little wooden pillow which supports the head while sleeping. A wish is made by its owner that he may enjoy the *yume no Fuji*, <sup>is</sup> dream of Fuji no yama,” which is to include the falcon and the egg-plant. If the wish is granted, the recipient will be most prosperous and happy during the ensuing year.

Another subject of the popular school quite commonly found is the *takaajō*, “hawk keeper,” who, as in the reproduction from an *Otsu-ye*, always is shown holding the falcon on his wrist. Sometimes,



the owner of the bird is similarly depicted as in the accompanying illustrations by Harunobu and Koryūsai. In both of these woodcuts the young sportsmen are represented in the *médise val* garb, with skirts, and long hair done up in coiffures, which have frequently caused them to be mistaken for women by students unfamiliar with the customs of the East.



From a coloured woodcut by Koryūsai. A New Year's Sportsman

The *Takajō* is one of the subjects of the famed *Otsu-ye*, “rough coloured pictures,” originated and sold to the travelling public for a mere pittance by an artist named

Matabei, who lived in the village of Otsu on Lake Biwa near Kyoto. The *Otsu-ye* are simple, spontaneous, and often very expressive characterizations of well-known traditional subjects which to-day are highly prized by print collectors, for they are regarded as the precursors of the coloured woodcuts. The Matabei here referred to must not be confused with Iwasa Matabei who was the founder of the Ukiyo-ye school and died in 1650. In the accompanying illustration of a triptych by Kuniyoshi, Matabei, who was frequently spoken of as *Otsu-ye* Matabei, is shown in the centre of the picture tossing his finished sketches into the air; and so realistic are they that they come to life, leave the paper, and form a *mandara*, “mystic circle,” around him.



From an *Ōtsu-ye*. The *Tahajō*

Among the figures he has portrayed, in addition to the *Takajō*, and the *Fuji Musume*, “Wisteria Girl”—both of which are also shown in separate illustrations—are a number of familiar characters which include Raiden, Hyōtan Namazu, Yakko, Daikoku, Ushiwaka, Oni no Nembutsu, Amma, and Benkei.

The illustration by Hokusai entitled “The *Odori*” represents a mysterious, benevolent, wonder-working, spectral bird, resembling a hawk, which is believed to fly all over the world carrying messages and serving mankind. Therefore, for the fulfilment of a wish it is said, “Ask it of the *ōdori*,” or if anyone has a great inspiration, it is said, “It came on the wing of the *taibo* or *odori*.” Again, it is quite usual to hear the remark, “I sent my thought by the *ōdori* and I am waiting for my answer.”

The *taka* of old has gone from the Land of the Rising Sun, but its spirit still lingers not only in the arts but in the hearts of the people. It always has been and always will be a symbol of victory. This was demonstrated by an incident which occurred during the war between Japan and China, 1894–1896. It happened that as the battleship which, by mere chance, bore the name of *Takachihō*, “Falcon

Cruiser,” was passing the island of Formosa, a wild hawk suddenly appeared and flew upon the ship’s mast. This being regarded as a most auspicious omen, it was captured and kept on board the vessel during the entire war. Then, when the troops returned to their own country, it was carried to the Emperor as one of the most important trophies of their victory.

Another evidence of the significance of this undaunted bird is to be found in the Medal of Victory which the Government confers upon distinguished warriors. It is known as the *Kinshi Kinshō* and has emblazoned upon it a golden falcon. The *taka* is used for this purpose in commemoration of the coming to Japan of its mythical ancestor, Jimmu Tennō, it being related that as he was about to land on the island’s shores, a falcon flew toward him and lit on the ship’s bow, an incident which has been regarded as prophetic of the success of his undertaking.

The hawk and its kin, the eagle and the vulture, appear in the mythology of India—the hawk as the *Garuda*, the *vāhan* of Vishnu; the eagle as the vehicle of Krishna; and the vulture, of which it is said, “Its face combines the age of China, the sorcery of Egypt, and the cunning of Arabia,” as the steed of the dark and malignant Sani or Saturn. They are, however, rarely seen in the arts.

## THE WOUNDED FALCON

WITHIN A DITCH BEYOND MY WALL  
I SAW A FALCON HEADLONG FALL;  
BEDAUBED WITH MUD AND RACKED WITH PAIN  
IT BEAT ITS WINGS TO RISE, IN VAIN ;  
WHILE LITTLE BOYS THREW TILES AND STONES  
EAGER TO BREAK THE WRETCH’S BONES.

O BIRD, METHINKS THY LIFE OF HATE  
HATH AMPLY JUSTIFIED THY FATE!  
THY SOLE DELIGHT TO KILL AND STEAL,  
AND THEN EXULTINGLY TO WHEEL—  
NOW SAILING IN THE CLEAR BLUE SKY,  
NOW IN THE WILD GALE SWEEPING BY;  
SCORNING THY KIND OF LESS DEGREE  
AS ALL UNFIT TO MATE WITH THEE.

BUT MARK, HOW FORTUNE’S WHEEL GOES ROUN!  
A PELLET LAYS THEE ON THE GROUND  
SORE STRICKEN AT SOME VITAL PART,—  
AND WHERE IS THEN THY PRIDE OF HEART?

WHAT’S THIS TO ME?—I COULD NOT BEAR  
TO SEE IT FALLEN, LYING THERE.  
I BEGGED IT LIFE, AND FROM THE BROOK  
WATER TO WASH ITS WOUNDS I TOOK;  
FED IT WITH BITS OF FISH BY DAY,  
AT NIGHT FROM FOXES KEPT AWAY.  
MY CARE I KNEW WOULD NOT AVAIL  
FOR GRATITUDE, THAT EMPTY TALE.  
AND SO THE BIRD WOULD CROUCH AND HIDE  
TILL WANT ITS STIMULUS APPLIED :  
AND I WITH NO REWARD TO HOPE,  
ALLOWED ITS CALLOUSNESS FULL SCOPE.

LAST NIGHT THE BIRD SHOWED SIGNS OF RAGE  
WITH HEALTH RENEWED, AND BEAT ITS CAGE :  
TO-DAY IT FORCED A PASSAGE THROUGH  
AND TOOK ITS LEAVE WITHOUT ADIEU.

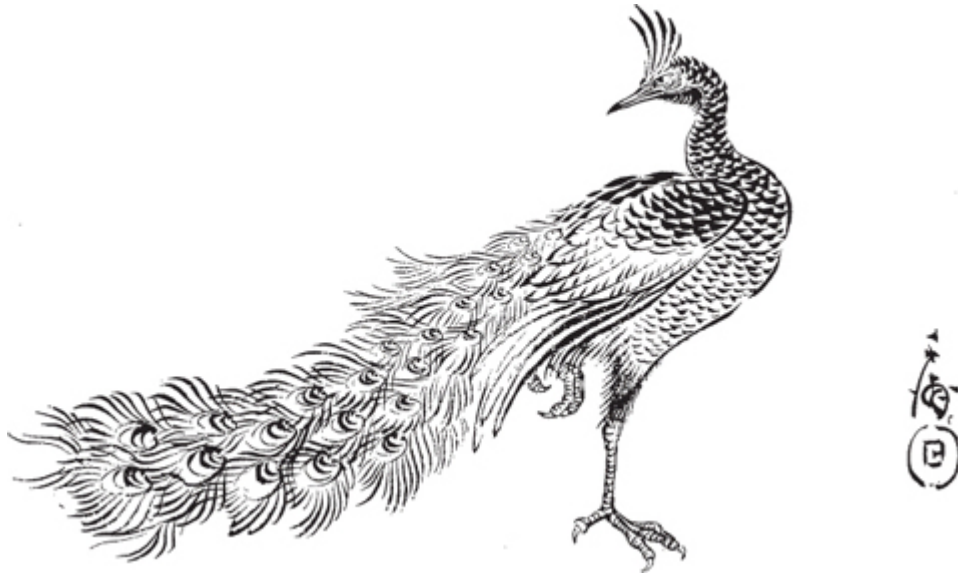
GOOD LUCK HATH SAVED THEE, NOT DESERT;  
BEWARE, O BIRD, OF FURTHER HURT;  
BEWARE THE ARCHER’S DEADLY TOOLS;  
‘TIS HARD TO DODGE THE SHAFTS OF FOOLS—  
NOR E’ER FORGET THE CHASTENING DITCH,  
THAT FOUND THEE POOR AND LEFT THEE RICH.

—HAN YU, A.D. 768–824.  
Giles’ Translation.

## CHAPTER XXIX

# THE PEACOCK

*“Bird of refulgent tints, whose beauty charms  
The eye of all beholders ! Dazzling bright  
Thy lovely plumage, spreading to the sun;  
Most striking of the living objects known ! ”*



From a painting by Chiura

THE peacock—the lordly fowl of gorgeous plumage which strides so majestically over the green swards of modern parks, harmless and inoffensive—originally came from southern Asia and the vast archipelago of the eastern ocean where it shared the jungles with serpents and tigers.

In the upper branches of the tangled forest as a safe retreat, it was able to evade its mortal enemies. With the serpent, however, the bird was the aggressor, generally overcoming its adversary by capering and dancing about, worrying it into exhaustion before making the attack.

Not so fortunate, though, was it with the tiger, and it is owing to the very necessity for protection from this foe that the world is indebted for the beautiful plumage of the bird. For biologists assert that, while Nature in her great scheme of creation plans to sustain the life of one class of animals by subsisting upon another, she in turn provides the weaker class with a means of outwitting the stronger by camouflage, a veritable coat of invisibility, which is scientifically known as “the covering of obliteration.” This fact—familiar with the toad, which turns brown when lodged on a tree trunk, and green when sitting upon a leaf—is true of birds, reptiles, and beasts. Even the rapacious tiger is given stripes which are designed to conceal it among the blades of the jungle grass. For like purpose, not only the bright colours, but the spottings of light and dark of the pattern in the plumage of the peacock perched on the trees or strutting among the brush resemble the surrounding scene.

The peacock is first known in connection with the primitive religions—Tree, Serpent, and Sun Worship. Its relation to Tree Worship is seen in a design quite common to the art crafts in which two peacocks are placed facing the Tree of Life; and to Serpent Worship where each of these very birds holds a snake in its beak. This is due doubtless to the habit of the peacock of killing and eating the crawler, thereby establishing the belief that the flesh of the bird was a panacea for the poison of snake-

bite. Its association with the sun may be accounted for by its crying at sunrise, for, like the cock, it was believed to be a sun worshipper.

The first tangible record of its existence designates it as a totem of a number of aboriginal tribes, most of whom were Scythian sun-worshippers.

Authorities agree that the genus *Pavo* originally came from India, whence it migrated to the countries where it later appeared. In any event, it is known that as early as the time of King Solomon (c. 950 B.C.) the stately bird was imported from this country by “the ruler of demons and birds,” as the Mohammedans called him. For according to 1 Kings x. 22,

The king had at sea a navy of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold and silver, ivory and apes, and peacocks.

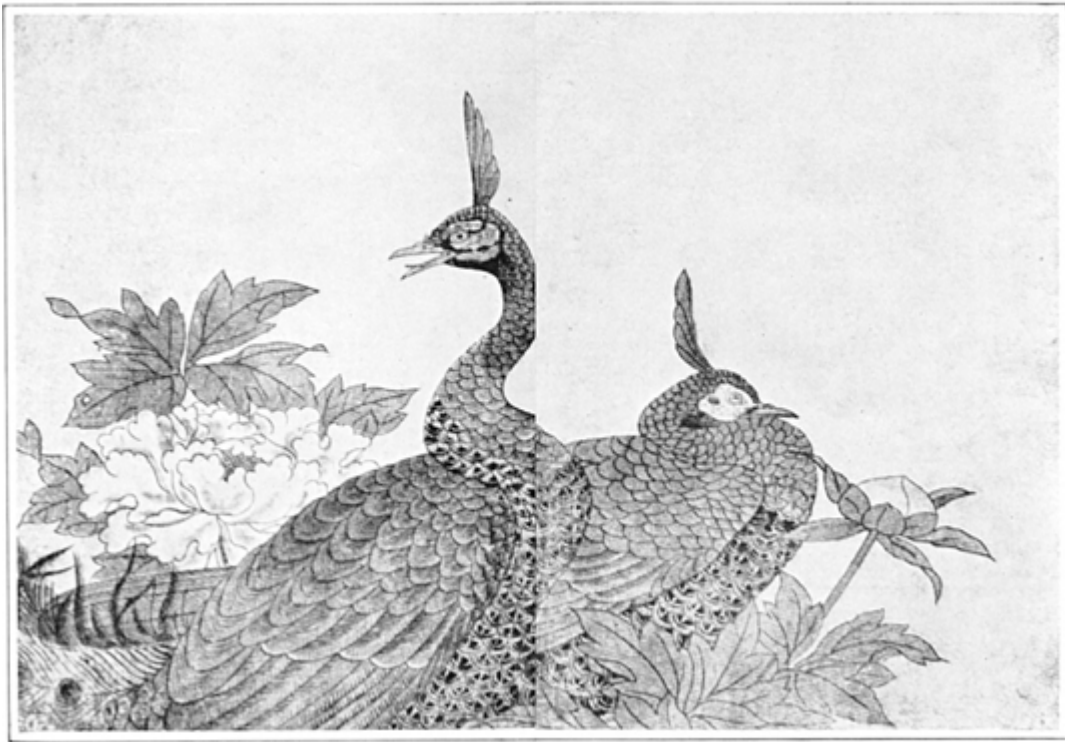


From a painting by Tessan Mori

Among the deities of India who are associated with the peacock are Lakshmi, Sarasvatī, and Kārtikeya, all of whom may be found represented in the ancient sculptures.

Lakshmi, the consort of the solar Vishnu, is the goddess of beauty. In her usual form she is shown between two elephants that face her and pour water over her head.





From a painting by Toriyama Sekiyen

Sarasvatī, the spouse of Brahmā, is the goddess of wisdom, science, music, and poetry, and the reputed mother of the VEDAS. She is sometimes represented seated on a lotus throne borne on the back of a sacred white peacock, though her actual *vāhan* is the *hansa*, a white fowl resembling a goose.



From a colour-print by Hichō

Kārtikeya is the god of war, the generalissimo of the Celestial armies, and the regent of the planet Mars. He is usually shown mounted on the peacock, *Pāravanī*.



From a painting by Ganku

In the arts of later days the peacock is sometimes represented pictorially as in the accompanying illustration by Jagannath, but more frequently in scenes like the representations of Krishna, where the bird appears to be dancing to the music of his flute. It is a common motive for the crafts, being quite conspicuous in printed cottons, while the *murhcal* held behind Indian potentates is made up entirely of the bird's tail feathers.

From India the peacock is said to have migrated to Persia, thence to Egypt, Greece, and Europe in one direction, and to China and Japan in the other. In Persia it was highly prized from time immemorial, and was ever the exclusive possession of royalty. Its image is common in the crafts, particularly those applied for Imperial purposes; but the most celebrated example of its use, associated with this country, is the *Tukt Taous*, "Peacock Throne."

This was, however, not a native product, but had been brought from India by the invader Nādir Shāh in 1739, who looted it from the palace Tama Masjid of Delhi. It had been built by Shāh Jahān, the Indian ruler famed as the creator of the peerless Tāj Mahal. It is described as one of the most costly thrones ever erected. Its value was estimated at the equivalent of six and a half millions sterling, due entirely to the use of numberless precious stones, among which were one hundred and eight rubies, one hundred and sixteen emeralds, numberless diamonds, and rare pearls. On the dome overshadowing the seat stood the peacock from which it derived its name. This image of the fowl, which was of beaten gold, sparkled with the lights of many gems, while its spread tail was a solid



mass of sapphires. It is said, however, to have been more of an extravagant piece of jewellery than a work of art.



From a painting by Tessa Mori

Whether the peacock was brought to Greece from India, or Persia or, like the alphabet, was an inheritance from the Phœnicians, is still an open question. However, like shining gold, glittering jewels, white ivory, and black ebony, it was one of the most admired and envied productions of India. As early as barter existed, specimens of the natural bird must have been carried by land and water and, whither it went, there followed its symbolic significance; otherwise the peoples of Greece and Italy would hardly have given it the name of their own goddess of light and day or held it to be the visible sign of the rainbow itself.



From a painting by Ganku

At an early period the ancient inhabitants of Greece associated it with the representation of the sun, hence it appears as the Greek bird-god, Phaon, "The Shiner," the progenitor of the fabled phoenix of a later date. It also became the attribute of the healing god Pæan whose ancient half-forgotten name the worshippers of Apollo called upon when they cried "Io Pæan." In combination with the eagle, it was originally an attribute of Pan who, later, was obliged to yield it to Hera at the time he was called upon to relinquish the eagle to Zeus.

Its first appearance on Greek soil, according to historical records, was on the island of Samos. There it became attached to the Heræum as the attribute of Hera, the goddess of heaven, becoming the star-bird, the symbol of the starry firmament on account of the eyes in its tail feathers, which were regarded as the very stars themselves.

Christianity adopted the peacock in its symbolism as an emblem of resurrection on account of the annual renewal of its feathers after moulting and the belief in the incorruptibility of the flesh.

For this reason, the bird was carved on the tombs of the apotheosized, and on funeral lamps to signify the ascension of the sanctified soul in its union with God.





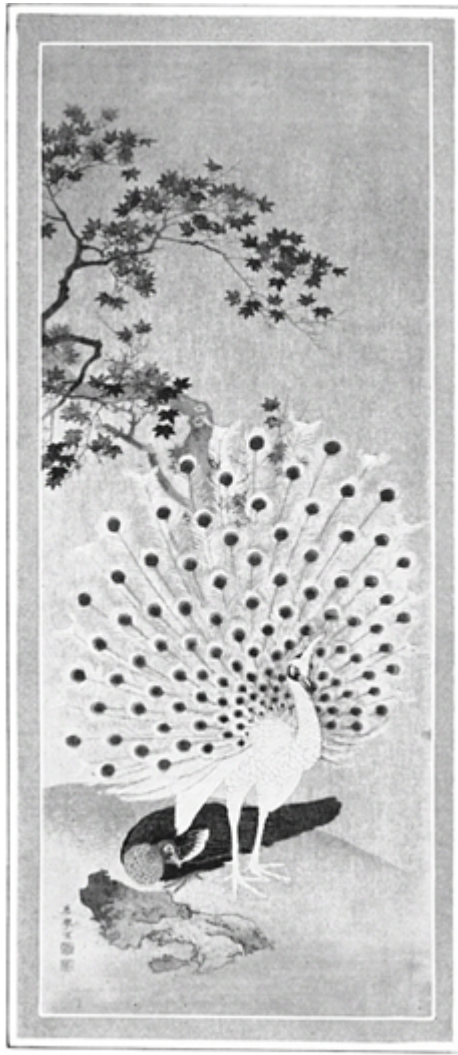
From a colour-print by Hiroshige

On the other hand, the distrust for all sensuous beauty peculiar to the asceticism of the times sharpened a sense of the imperfections of the gorgeous creature. Its ugly feet, awkward movement, and harsh strident cry became contrasted with the extraordinary splendour of its crest, neck, long wing coverts, and the haughtiness of its demeanour, furnishing ample material for moralization by didactic poets and homilists. It is then not surprising that the peacock should be accused of having “the slinking gait of a thief, the voice of the devil, and the garb of an angel,” and that there should be the prevalent superstition that peacock’s feathers bring bad luck to their possessor.

In China the peacock is known as *k’ung chüeh*, “large sparrow,” and also called *k’ung ch’iao*, “Confucian bird,” significant of a great and magnificent fowl. It was regarded as the symbol of the spirit of fire, for which, as well as for its beauty and rarity, it was highly prized.

It was introduced into the Flowery Kingdom from adjacent countries, for, according to a history of the T’ang dynasty, “many thousand districts paid tribute in peacocks, their feathers being required by the State, not only as decorations for the Imperial processions, but for the designation of official rank. The peacock feather was bestowed upon officials, both military and civil, in expression of Imperial favour as a reward for faithful service. Such feathers differed according to the honour to be dispensed, hence, there are the flower feather, the green feather, and the one-eyed, two-eyed, and three-eyed, all of which were greatly treasured and worn upon public occasions.”

This use of the feather is accounted for by the following legend :



From a painting by Maruyama Okyo

In the Chin dynasty, a defeated general took refuge in a forest where there were many peacocks. When the pursuing forces arrived and found the fowls quiet and undisturbed, they concluded that no one could possibly have come that way, and forthwith abandoned the search. The general—who later became known as the ancestor of five kings—was thus able to escape and so grateful was he that later, when he came into power, he instituted the custom of conferring a peacock feather as an honour for the achievement of bravery in battle.



From a screen-painting by Maruyama Okyo

There are many legends in the ancient writings pertaining to the peacock's love of music, its habit of dancing, and its vanity. In these, a number of sages, who beguile their lonely hours with playing upon musical instruments, are visited by the bird, which is said "to approach with propriety and dance in the rhythm of the melody." One poet, after saying that the peacock spreads its tail like a screen, concludes with "when the bird is brought before a mirror it will dance in admiration of its own beauty."

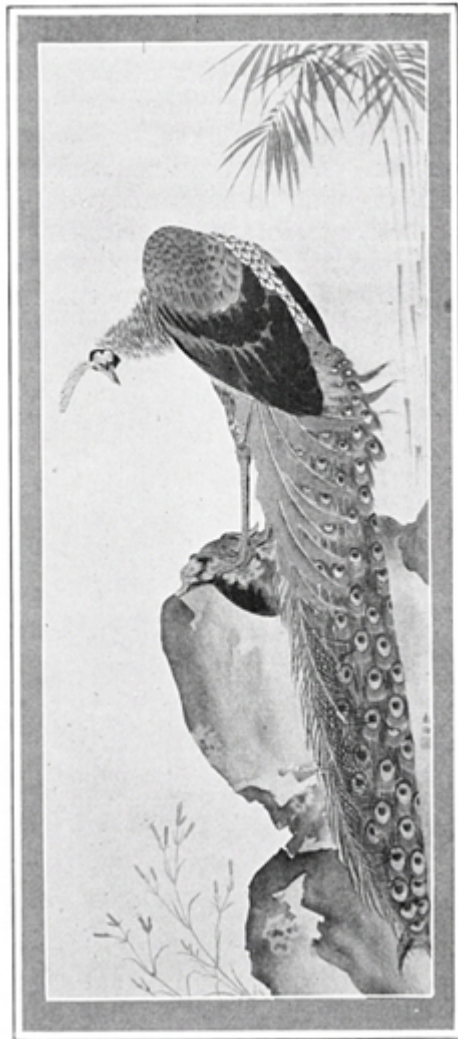


From a painting of the Fujiwara period. Kujaku Myō-ō

A legend, quite familiar even to this generation of the Chinese, pertains to the Empress Tao, the founder of the T'ang dynasty. Tradition relates that her father, seeing her beauty and ability, concluded she should be given an exceptional husband. He therefore consulted her regarding her own desires. It appears that her favourite occupation was embroidering peacocks on screens, so she replied that she would marry the man who would succeed in shooting the eyes from one of her peacocks. Many were the suitors who vainly made the effort. Finally, Kao-tsu succeeded. From that remote time, when the selection of a son-in-law is being considered, the one chosen is spoken of as "The right man for the peacock screen."

The peacock does not appear in painting until the T'ang dynasty, and then it is combined with the peony, for the Chinese say that the peony, which is the king of flowers, is the worthy companion of the king of birds. The peony, therefore, being thus distinguished, is honoured by a number of names. Botanically it is called *mou tan*, but poetically it is called *hua wang*, "kingly blossom," *kuo hsieh*, "nation's beauty," and *tien shang*, "heaven's fragrance." It is ever an omen of good fortune when full of blossoms and green with leaves, otherwise it presages poverty and disaster.

In Japan the peacock is known by the name *kujaku*. The first mention of it occurs in the *NIHONGI*, seventh century, where it is related that in the fifth year of the reign of Suiko, a foreign prince came to the court to pay a friendly visit and brought a gift of a peacock and a parrot.



From a painting by Sōken Yamaguchi



Then, at a much later period, a pair of peacocks, which had been sent as a new years' gift to the Prince of Hizen, was the source of the following amusing incident. It appears that, as the guests of the day were admiring the birds, they were asked to designate the sex of the most beautiful of the two birds. The gentlemen, glancing at the gaily arrayed ladies who were present, replied, "The hen"; but when the ladies were questioned—following the modesty characteristic of Japan's women—they answered, "The cock." To the latter, the Prince, bowing low, replied, "Quite right ! Nature herself will ever have the male best clad, and it seems singular that a wife should wish to be more beautifully clothed than her husband."



From a wooden statue of the Kamakura period. Kujaku Myō-ō

The most ancient example of painting connected with the peacock in Japan is that of the representation of the Buddhist healing deity, Kujaku Myō-ō, the Japanese counterpart of the Hindu déification of the fowl. The reason for this exaltation of the fowl is accounted for as follows :

"A priest, appealing to Buddha for relief from the bite of a cobra, was told that the worship of Mayurī Vidyārāja would render the devotee immune from the poisonous effects of such a bite, since the peacock fed upon venomous reptiles. Since that occurrence, this god has ever been invoked, not only for protection from serpents, but from every kind of calamity."

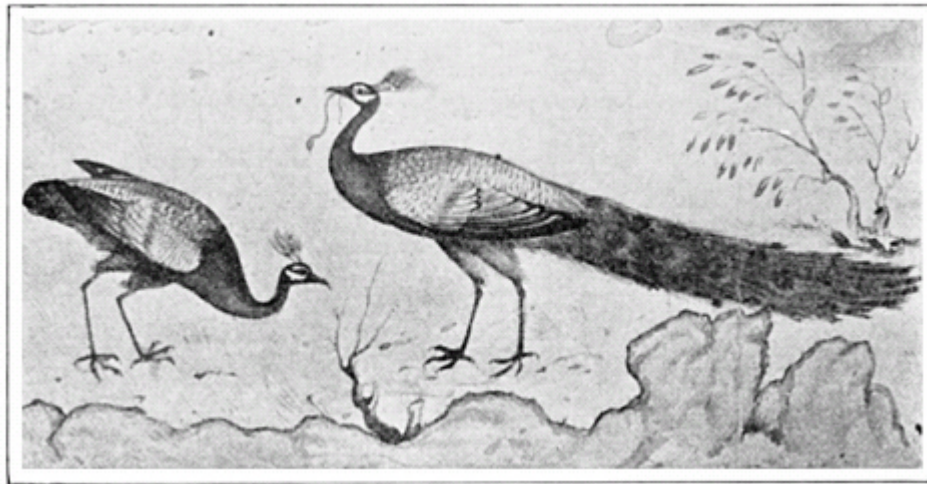
Two illustrations of Kūjaku Myō-ō are herewith shown—one, a reproduction from a wooden statue, the work of the Kamakura period, and the other, of a painting from the Fujiwara period.

Another deity shown using the peacock for a mount is one of the five manifestations of Kokuzō, the Hindu Akāśa-garbhā, a god of wisdom; while again, among the Jains of Tibet, one of the five celebrated Buddhas, the Meditative Dhyāni of the West, also uses a peacock for the same purpose.



The painting of the peacock—generally in combination with the peony, as in China—is of more recent date, having become a very popular theme with the artists of the Bird-and-Flower, or Shijō school of Maruyama Ōkyo, referred to in preceding chapters, and of whose brush several examples are herewith given. Ōkyo lived 1733–1795, and among his many pupils are the painters of the accompanying illustrations, Tessan Mori and Soken Yamaguchi. Ganku, the remaining painter herewith shown, who enjoys the reputation of being the greatest of Japanese painters of the tiger, although not a pupil of Ōkyo, worked most successfully in his style.

The subject of the peacock and the peony is also popular, not only with the designers of the Ukiyo-ye schools, as shown in the accompanying illustrations of colour prints by Hichō and Hiroshige, but with the artisans as well. It is quite often seen on the *fukusa*, the honourable covering of a package that is sent as a gift. More frequently, however, it is found in the *ramma*, the open carvings placed over the screens which form the partition between the rooms of a house, or in the ornamentation of the exterior of both palaces and temples.



From a Hindu painting by Jagannath

## CHAPTER XXX

### THE COCK

*The Cocke is the royallest bird that is, and of himself a king, for Nature hath crowned hime with perpetual Diadème, to Mme and to his posteritie forever. He is the valientest in battle of all birdes, for he would rather die than yield to his adversarie.*

GERARD LEIGH.



From a painting by Chiura

THE cock is known to the Chinese as *kung chi* and to the Japanese as *ondori*. From prehistoric times it has been endowed with great significance, even to the extent of being included among the animals of the duodenary cycle, hence a conspicuous motive in the arts. Of all birds the most pugnacious and fearless, it became the symbol of valour, while its habit of lustily crowing at sunrise caused it to be regarded as an auspicious herald. For, according to ancient lore, the denizens of darkness prowled at night, disseminating evil influences to afflict humanity, and the cock's shrill cry, announcing the coming of the "lord of day," put them all to flight.

Not only for this act of beneficence, but on account of its association with the sun, the cock became one of the potent symbols of *Yang*, the active principle of light and life, which is ever employed as an instrument of good to overcome the *Yin*, the passive principle of gloom and death. Hence, since it was believed that the forces of evil ever regarded the cock with perpetual dread and fear, the bird—either as a whole or in parts, alive or as an image—was used as an antidote against all forms of disease, adversity, or disaster. Therefore, in times of an epidemic a cock's head was attached to houses, or an earthen cock was placed on the roofs—which fact accounts for the interesting clay tiles so common among architectural decorations.

The cock is habitually used in connection with the dead, its principal mission being to keep away evil spirits. At a funeral, a white cock—white being the colour of mourning—either alive or artificial, sometimes made of bamboo splints and again of mortuary paper, is sent forth with the cortège, to

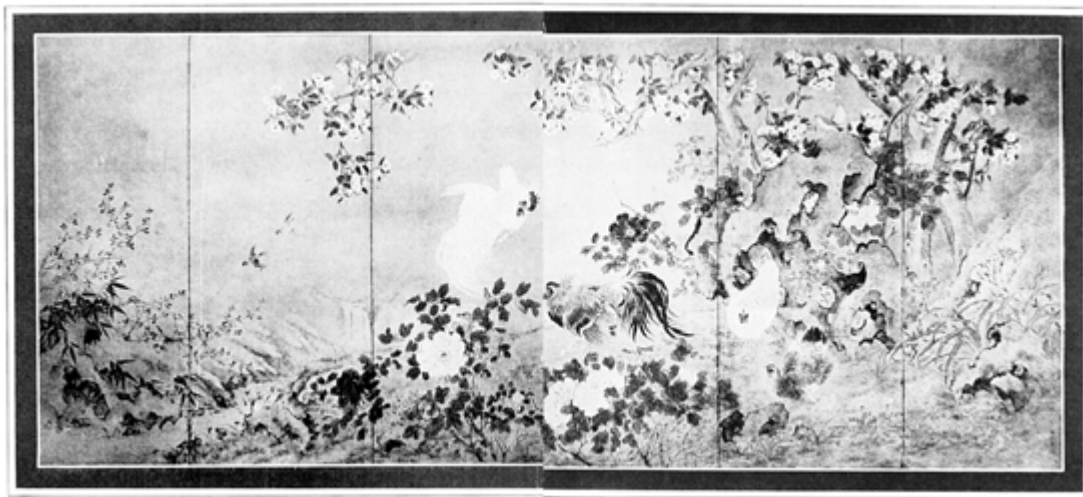
entice one of the spirits of the departed to enter it and return to the house. For the Chinese believe that, at death, three distinct spirits emanate from the body, one remaining in the house and entering a tablet, another accompanying the corpse to the grave, and the third wandering about through space. Again, a cock's feather, which is thought to possess the crowing potentiality of the bird, is placed in the coffin to awaken the dead and send him on his journey to the under-world.

Cocks are also used at marriages, two of white sugar being placed before the ancestral tablets, the worship of which constitutes one of the features of the ceremony. Then, also, the bride and groom not only drink from the same cup, but eat of the same sugar cock to symbolize a happy union.



From a painting by Biho

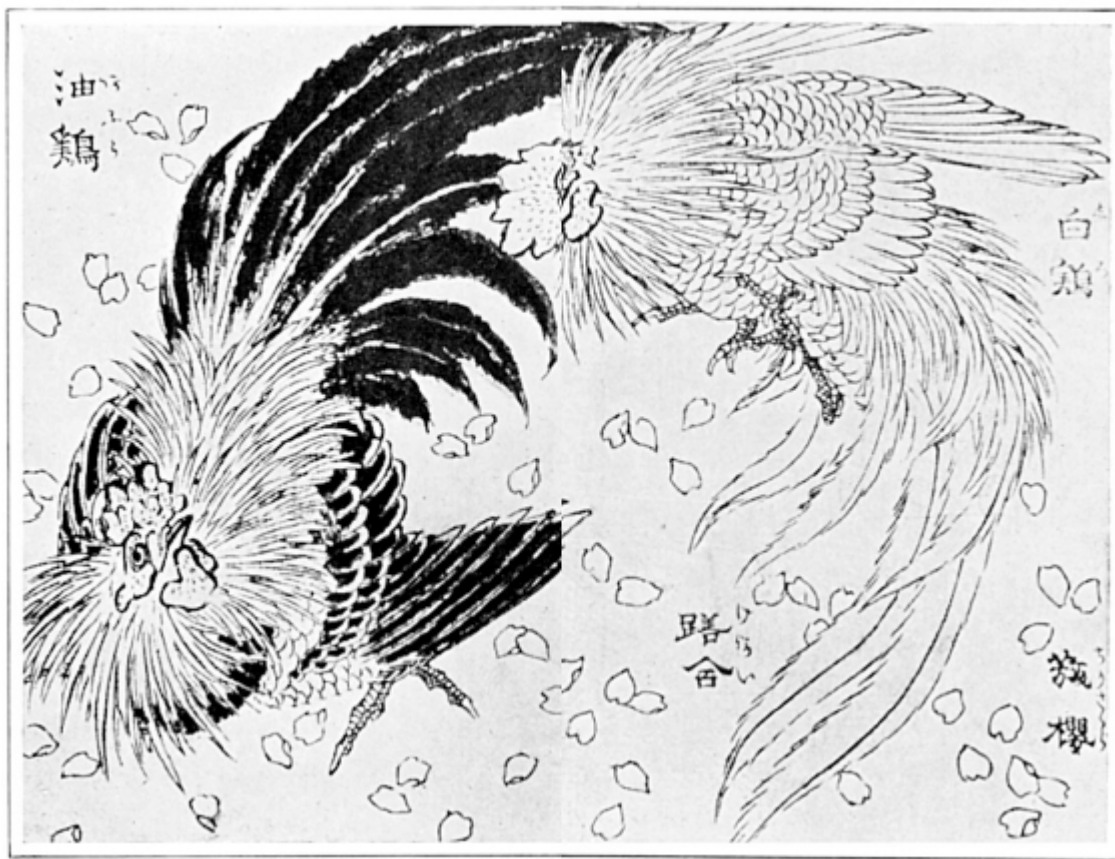
Again, at the birth of a child a live cock is passed through a barrel hurriedly many times with a prayer that the child may get by the dangers of life with the same ease and rapidity that the cock passed through the barrel.



From a screen-painting by

Another reason given for the cock's being a lucky symbol is due to the homophone *chi*, which is the same for the characters used for the words "cock" and "fortunate."

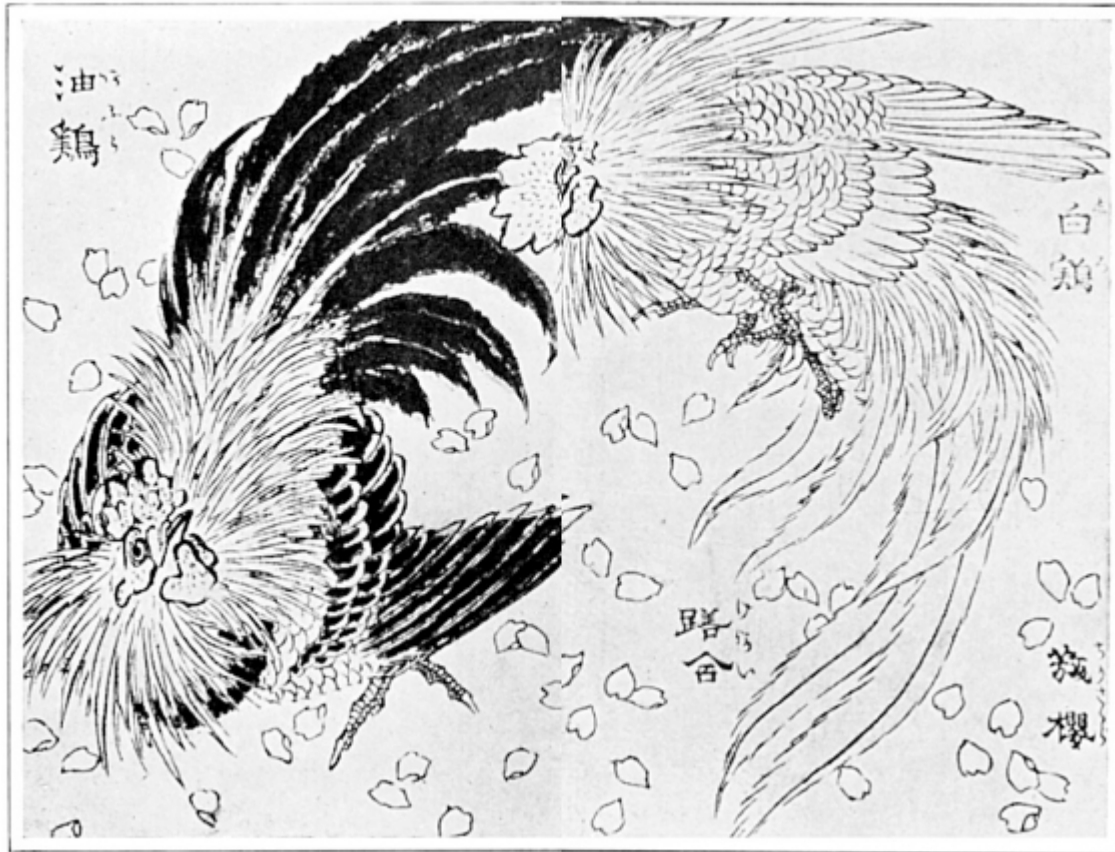
Similar superstitions existed in India, where this fowl is represented by the *swastika* in both its male and female forms to symbolize the sun-bird moving round the heavens, going north as a hen-bird at the winter solstice, and returning south as the sun-cock at the summer solstice. A *triskeles* of cock's heads significant of the same idea is sometimes found on Asiatic coins.



From a coloured woodcut by Taitō



Cocks were likewise sacrificed to the sun-god of the solstitial sun by some of the tribes, and during the agricultural ceremonies in some sections cocks were beheaded, and their blood sprinkled over a clay or metal effigy. Again, for a disease among cattle a black cock was used as a scapegoat. Arrayed with a red cap, a spangle on its forehead, some antimony covering its eyes, and a pewter bangle attached to one leg, it was liberated and driven away while the crowd in attendance exhorted the disease with: "Mount the fowl and go elsewhere into the ravines and thickets ! Destroy the sin ! "



From a painting by Jakuchi

In Europe the cock was also an ancient symbol, and thought to have had a phallic origin, for it figures quite extensively in the vernal ceremonies. It was sacred to Attis, the god of spring and fertility of the eastern Mediterranean, thus bringing it with the hen into the circle of universal symbolism as the hatcher of the World Egg. It was likewise one of the forms in which the corn-spirit was supposed to appear.

In the Maypole dances it occupied a basket on the top of the pole, while on the eve of this festival it was tied to the top of a rod, and carried by boys around the pole.

The Jews sacrificed a white cock on the eve of the Day of Atonement and regarded it as a fertility charm. For this reason, among the Jews of the Talmud period, a cock and hen were carried before a bridal couple on their wedding day.

As in the Orient, the cock's crow was believed to arrest the forces of evil, for it was said to frighten away the "angel of death" which may pass over a home, and it warns all nocturnal wraiths of the hour for departure, just as Shakespeare makes the ghost of Hamlet's father vanish when he says, "It fadeth on the crowing of the cock." Again, Jesus was said to have been born at the cock's crow, "for at this hour all evil spirits of the night do fly away."

It is frequently mentioned in the Scriptures, the best known instance being in connection with the cowardly and recreant Peter whom Jesus admonished with: "Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even



this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.” As a favourite Christian symbol it was quite commonly used on church steeples and towers “to symbolize not only the virtues of vigilance and liberality, but to represent the clergy. It shows its liberality by the manner in which it shares the food it finds among the hens; and its vigilance, by the constancy in which it keeps the deep watches of the night, proclaiming the hours. To the preachers—who are exhorted not to be a weather vane blown by every wind of doctrine—it even offers an example to emulate, for as it awaketh the sleepers by its shrill cry, so they should induce the sinners to abandon their evil works and ways.”



From a painting by Kohō

Two fighting cocks, in which one has succumbed to the onslaughts of the other, are frequently found on early Christian sarcophagi, probably significant of the battle of life; while the hen and chickens also appear in the sculptures of old ecclesiastical buildings as an emblem of God's providence.

The fighting propensities of the cock were another characteristic of its distinction. It is said never to have feared to attack the most venomous of serpents in defending the hens, for which reason it has been designated “The little king of reptiles,” its red comb being regarded as a crown. In consequence of this, the broth of a cock was prescribed as a remedy for the poison of serpents. There is also a belief that even the lion, the king of beasts, lived in fear of the cock, for the latter's crow terrified it and put it to rout. Hence, Pliny recommends the broth of stewed cock as an excellent outward application for those in peril of wild beasts.



From a Chinese painting by Sê Hsiang

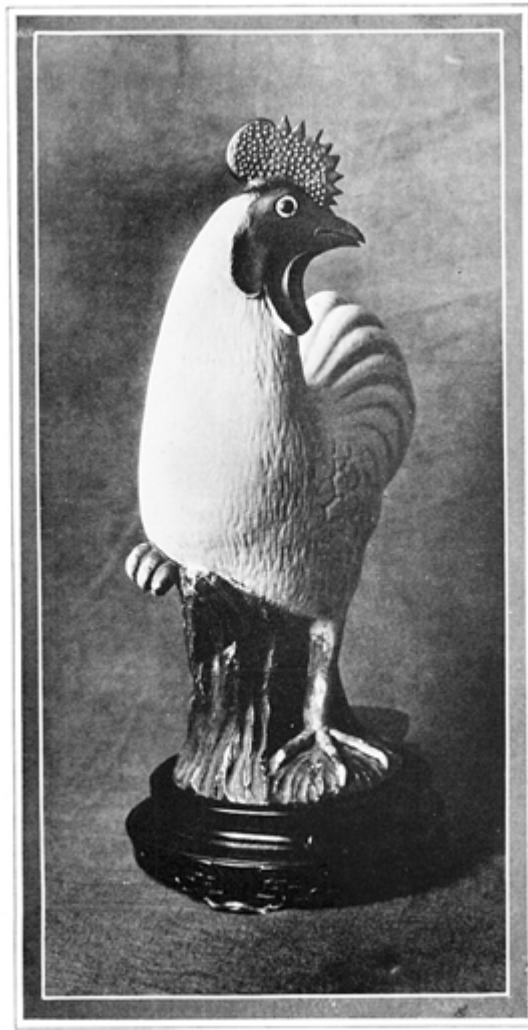
But apart from the startling clarion call of the bird, the assurance with which it struts, its aggressive and formidable bearing, of which the poet Blake wrote:

A game cock clipp'd and armed for fight  
Doth e'en the rising sun affright,

has undoubtedly led to its being selected as the bird of battle. For in war-time a white cock with red comb was sacrificed to Mars; and the Gauls fought under a cock's standard, for which reason the bird's image appears on Gallo-Roman sculptures and coins.

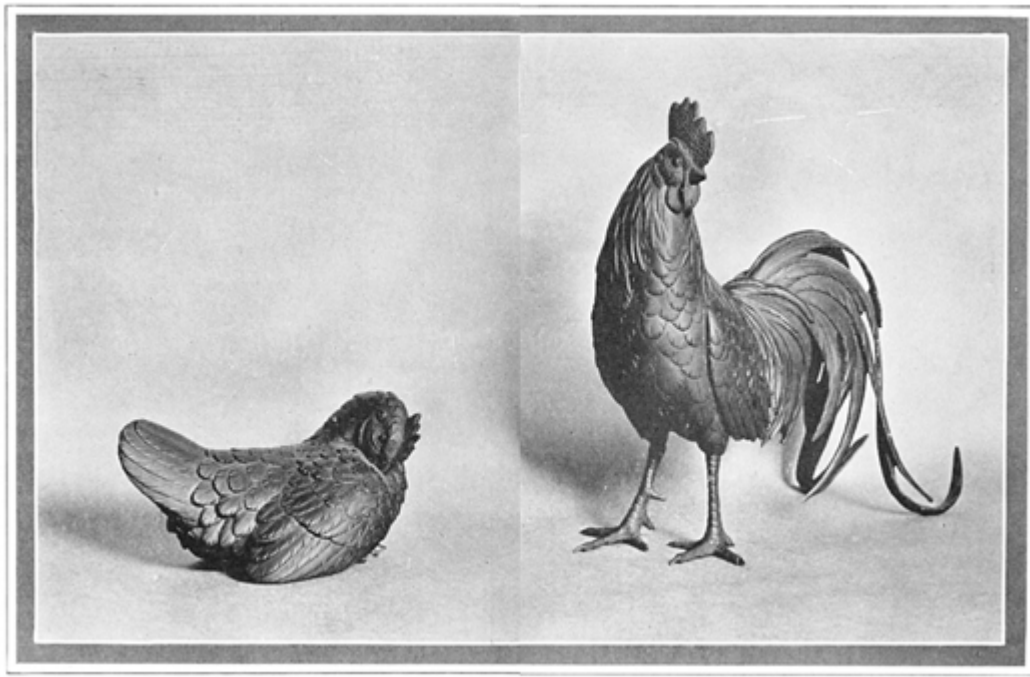
The Carians and Cretans used the cock with significance, while again a cock decorates the helmet of the statue of Athena—the Ionian tree-mother.

In heraldry it appears under a dual nature, as a symbol of soldierly courage and of religious aspiration. It is found as a crest of the early Bourbons, and was definitely adopted as the avian emblem under Louis Philippe. As the *coq Gaulois*, it was the badge worn on the shako of an officer of the Civic Guards under this monarch.



From a Chinese porcelain. K'ang Hsi period

The Japanese, inheriting the superstitions from India and China, held the cock in great esteem not only on account of its symbolic significance, but for the beauty of its plumage. They have, in consequence, developed distinct species not to be found in other countries. Therefore in addition to the common fowl—the direct offspring of the Indian jungle, a vari-coloured bird with limp tail—they now have, through cross-breeding, not only the beautiful pure white or albino bird, known as the *shirō clori*, but the *chabo*, “dwarf cock,” a bantam with comb and tail erect which, with its mate, may be seen in the homes and shops of the lower classes, ever about the place unmolested, veritable members of the household. Then there is the *ukokkei*, which is distinguished by an unusual tuft of feathers on the back of the head. Of this breed, it is said, ninety per cent of the hens are black, and of the cocks, white.



From Japanese bronzes. *Ondori ni Mendori*

But the most important variety of this feathered tribe is the *shamo*, “fighting cock,” introduced from Siam, a powerful bird with long muscular neck and heavy legs from which extend very marked horny spurs. It has very fierce and discerning eyes, and in youth possesses an attractive bunch of tail feathers which, after the experience of several battles, becomes seriously impaired. Hence painters generally select for their models the youthful warrior instead of the war-scarred tailless veteran.

In times past it was not uncommon for the man of wealth to breed the cock for sport, some having as many as fifty birds under the care of a special trainer. Such fowls were most carefully groomed, their legs massaged and their spurs trimmed; and as this particular breed is carnivorous, they were fed on insects. Just before a combat, however, they were given a meal of *mamushi*, a poisonous viper, the flesh of which was held to produce a war-like spirit. Then, as the cock was about to enter the pit, the keeper gave it a drink of water from his own mouth, and patted it on the back to give it courage.

During the combat the opponents fought until one was exhausted, when the umpire called the game, but in some cases the birds continued the contest until one was killed, and when the battle was over the victor never failed to lift his head on high and crow his declaration of victory.



From a Japanese painting

Cock-fighting appears to have been common among all peoples, primitive and civilized, in all parts of the world, and it is still practised in Spanish and Malay countries, and India. The Greeks and Romans delighted in this cruel sport, holding their games during the seed-time festivals because these poor creatures were then the most fierce.

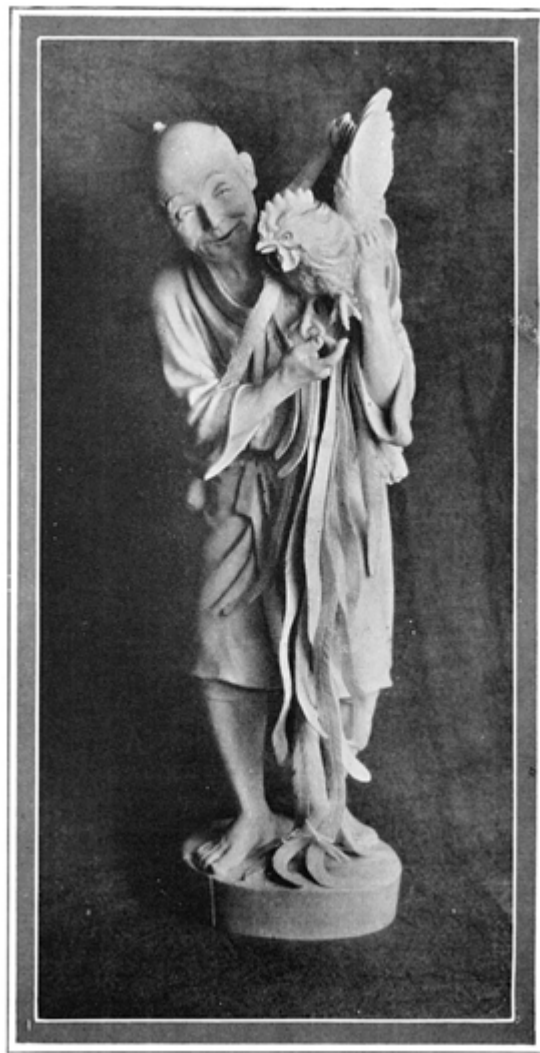
In England cock-fighting flourished for fully six centuries, the cockpit at Whitehall having been erected and patronized by Royalty. It was, however, prohibited at three distinct times, as early as 1365, then in 1653, and later in 1849, but it is still sometimes practised in spite of such legislation. Notwithstanding this prohibition, it was especially sanctioned as an annual sport of the public schools at Shrove-tide, the schoolmaster receiving a regular tax from the boys.

That cock-fighting was a lure was unquestionably true, even to people who otherwise discredited cruel sports, for even of a pious old deacon of the Methodist church it was said, "He knew the Book from kiver to kiver, but he would fight cocks."

To the Japanese people cock-fighting, in addition to its sport interest, had its picturesque aspects in the action of the combat as well as in the beauty of the fowl, as shown in the accompanying illustrations of the works of Kwatei Taki, Taitō, a pupil of the well-known Hokusai, Koryūsai, and Hokkei. In these subjects, as well as in the representation of the domestic felicity of the cock and hen,



as in the illustrations by Bihō, Kohō, Jakuchi, and the Chinese painting by Sê Hsiang—a copy of a famous painting of an early period—the artist habitually paints one of the fowl white, and the other coloured. This is to comply with the demands of the principle of *In-yō*, to give the variety of tone contrast so important to every graphic representation.



From a Japanese ivory carving. The *Onagadori*

Another species of fowl to be found in Japan is the *onagadori*, a long-tailed cock, the feathers of which range from thirteen to twenty feet. It is the product of centuries of experiments in artificial breeding through selection, having been introduced from Korea shortly after the invasion of that country by Jimmu Tennō about the seventh century, B.C.; but its earliest graphic representation is A.D. 1100.

The most famous breed of the bird came from the province of Tosa and, while now quite rare, it still may be found at bird shows in the large cities, and in public parks, while stuffed examples of the best types may be seen in the Government museums.

The processes of its rearing have been kept secret, though it is known that it takes at least six years under a professional trainer to bring a bird to maturity. The lengthening of the feathers, so puzzling to breeders, is said to be produced through the control of its moulting in combination with special feeding. And in order to protect these feathers while growing, the poor bird is kept in a high narrow cage, quite dark except at the top, and only taken out once in two days, when it is allowed to walk about for half an hour while its keeper follows, holding up its tail so that its precious feathers may not

become soiled or injured. When it is necessary to ship a bird to some other place, it is packed in a tight-fitting box with a special partition for its tail, and a grating for air at one end only.

The hen, also a handsome bird having tail-feathers longer than the common variety, and the breeding cock are not subjected to this ordeal.

Notwithstanding the artificial life of the *onagadori*, it is quite hardy and sometimes lives to the age of nine. It is very gentle and affectionate and, when taken from its dark cage into the light, will nestle timidly against its master's arm. In the accompanying illustration of an ivory carving by Bōkō, not only is the cock shown in all its beauty, but the tender solicitude of the keeper for his charge is most admirably expressed.



From an embroidered *fukusa*. The Drum of Peace

The value of this fowl depends upon the number of its long feathers. For example, a cock having twenty tail-feathers of twelve feet long is worth more than one which has four feathers fifteen feet long, while the bird that has a long growth of both the tail-feathers and the tail covert feathers is still more highly regarded; and when such feathers are pure white the consummation of the greatest beauty has been attained. One of this distinction was sent from Kōchi to Paris in 1880.



From a coloured woodcut by Kunisada. Enticing Amaterasu from the Cave

The illustration by Kyōsen—a reproduction of a woodcut in the Imperial Museum at Tokyo, dated 1880—according to the inscription on the print, shows a portrait of a Tosa fowl having a tail measuring thirteen feet and five inches, and consisting of twenty feathers of nearly equal length.



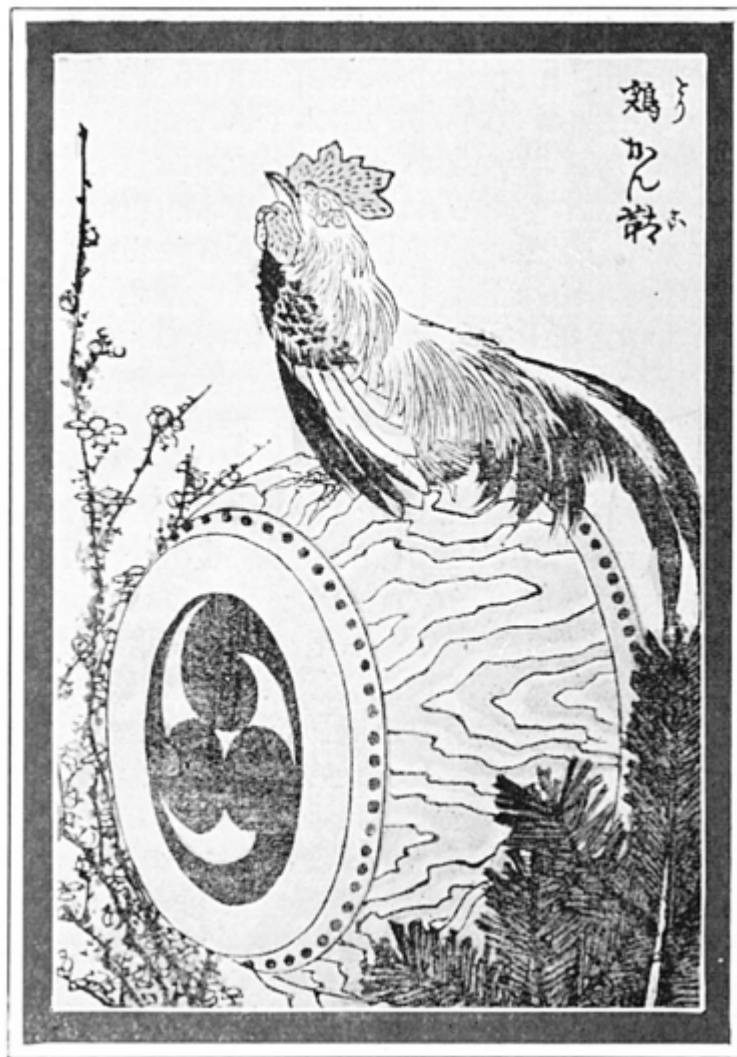
From a coloured woodcut by Yeizan. Playing *Osairei*

Cocks are held in great esteem by the Shinto priests, and kept about the precincts of the temples, where they are useful not only in foretelling the weather, but as timekeepers for their habitual crowing at regular intervals. In the days before the advent of clocks, the common people always regulated their affairs by the cock's crow, which occurred every two hours, even during the night; and tradition relates that when the male bird failed in this important duty, the ever-watchful hen, roosting beside him, reminded him by pecking his feet.



From a coloured woodcut by Koryūsai

But the chief reason for keeping these fowl on the temple grounds is their connection with the legend of Amaterasu, the sun-goddess. This myth—which doubtless had its origin in an effort to record an eclipse of the sun—relates that, on account of an offence offered to the goddess by her brother Susano-o, the moon-god, she retired to a cave leaving heaven and earth enshrouded in darkness. Then the eighty myriads of gods assembled on the Tranquil Biver of Heaven to devise a means of enticing her forth. To Omohi-kane, “the wise one,” was assigned this difficult undertaking. He decided upon a plan which should excite the curiosity and jealousy of the deity. So assembling the gods at the entrance of the cave, with the place illuminated by many bonfires, he had Ame no Uzume, the “Dread Female of Heaven”—popularly known as the goddess of mirth and folly—perform a dance amid the noisy applause and laughter of the company.



From a coloured woodcut by Taitō. The Cock and Drum

Amaterasu, hearing this great commotion and the praises bestowed upon the dancer, inquired whom she might be, when one of the gods replied, "One more enchanting than thyself." She, thereupon, at once opened a crack and peeped out to see her rival when, simultaneously, one god held a mirror before her, where she saw herself reflected, and another seizing the rock at the entrance drew it back so that she was unable to return.

The prologue to this performance consisted of a prolonged cry of "the long-singing birds of the eternal land," or the cocks, which act accounts for the reverence for them held by the Shintōists.





From a *surimono* by Hokkei

Among the subjects which artists delight in representing is the *Kanhodori*, “Cock and Drum.” This is another inheritance from China, where it is known as the *Kung-chi Ku*, and illustrates a legend in connection with the ancient and famous Emperor Yao, who always had a large drum at the main gate of the palace to assemble troops. But under the rule of this benign monarch there was no war, and the drum, falling into disuse, became the resting-place for fowl. In Japan, the Emperor Kōtoku Tennō, in the seventh century, caused a similar drum to be placed outside the palace gates for his subjects to beat, when they wished to call attention to any grievance. Here, again, the people were so contented and happy that the drum became an undisturbed roosting-place for the cock and hen; hence, the *Kanhodori* is ever regarded as a symbol of Peace. The *Shōguns* of Kamakura also used it, but while the drums of the earlier periods were decorated with the dragon and pearl—as in the accompanying illustration of the *fukusa*—in later times it was adorned by the *mitsutomoye*, as shown in the illustration by Taitō.

In the coloured woodcut by Yeizan, of “Playing *Osairei*” a spring-time Shinto festival, the *Kankodori* occupies a conspicuous place.

The cock, like the phoenix and the peacock, is commonly combined with the peony and butterflies, in addition to which the Japanese delight in representing it with the convolvulus. In Chinese porcelains of the K’ang Hsi and Yung Cheng periods it is also found with blossoming trees.

The cock and hen—known to the Japanese as *Ondori ni Mendori*, from their constant companionship—are quite commonly compared to a married couple. The occidental “hen-pecked” husband is unknown in the Orient; for there, woman is trained from infancy for her subordinate position in the home and society. Therefore, the occidental aphorism, “The woman that whistles and

the hen that crows has a good time wherever she goes,” does not apply in the Far East, where the crowing hen is in disfavour. Hence, the woman who forgets her station in life and becomes bold and noisy is likened to a crowing hen; and to check any attempt on the part of women to participate in public affairs the Japanese say, “When the hens crow the nation will fall.”

Cock and hen subjects are ever in evidence in Japan. Artists in every line delight in their representation, due, doubtless, as much to a sincere appreciation of the picturesque and decorative qualities of the grace and beauty of the fowl, as to their symbolic significance.

These subjects are likewise popular in Europe, where wares which they embellish find a ready market. This is particularly true of France, probably on account of the chanticleer's heraldic association, and the feeling entertained for the *coq Gaulois*, which ever suggests the fortitude of a daring spirit.

In England, also, they are popular, especially the single cock, such as the Chinese porcelain of the K'ang Hsi period herewith shown; for this has for some time been a very fashionable dining-room ornament. In the United States, unfortunately, the aesthetic characteristics of the cock and hen have not as yet to any extent impressed the buying public, who probably see it only in relationship to its barnyard activities and unconsciously share the feeling entertained for it by the Buddhists:

“If fate decreed that the world were ever to be deprived of lotuses, might we not expect to see the swan scratching the dust-heap like the cock?”

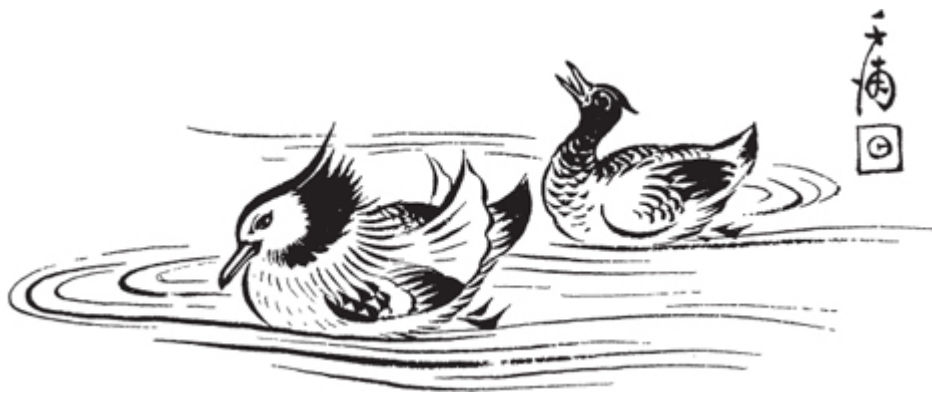


From a woodcut by Kyosen. The *Onagadori*

## CHAPTER XXXI

### WATER-FOWL

*'Tis winter and snow time.  
The cold winds blow hard  
And roughen the water,  
But peacefully  
The oshi-dori swim on.*



From a painting by Chiura

AMONG the aquatic birds of the Far East, both the duck and the goose have for centuries been extensively used as an art motive. The cormorant, which, both in China and Japan, has been and still is so useful in catching fish, is occasionally seen, but rarely the swan, so intimately associated with India and Europe, or the pelican, so closely identified with the heraldry of the West.

Of these two popular fowl—which, in oriental as well as occidental lore, are ever given the feminine appellation of duck and goose, instead of the masculine of drake and gander—the duck appears to take precedence, due doubtless to its habits of life which so closely resemble those of humanity.

While all the *Anatinæ* family is much esteemed, the mandarin duck is especially prized, as much for its beauty as for its symbolical significance. It has a most strikingly variegated plumage, including most of the spectrum colours, in addition to which the male is distinguished by a narrow ruff of feathers and recurved secondaries of the wings which stand up like fans above its back.

In China this fowl is known as the *yuan yang* and in Japan as the *oshi-dori*, but in both countries it symbolizes connubial affection, mutual consideration, and fidelity. This significance was given to it by the Buddhists, who early observed that these birds, being monogamous, when paired remain true to each other for life; and if they become separated by storm or any other cause, they never become consoled by a new mate, but pine away and die.

They are ever thoughtful of each other, always gentle and kindly in their manners, never noisy and quarrelsome, but quiet and peaceful. They also manifest the utmost indifference to hardships and, being winter birds, remaining after other fowl have migrated to a warmer clime, they cling to each other unheeding of wind or weather.

For these reasons this pair of flowery fowl has become a model for emulation by humanity in general, and by married people in particular, and many are the legends, traditional and historical, which connect the mandarin ducks with the Great Enlightened One. In a series of such tales known to

the Japanese as Buddha's *Ohmu Kyō*, there is one which relates that a pair of these birds prophesied the coming of the Lord. Hence, as a child, Gautama always had two of them for playmates. From this intimacy he became so impressed with their virtues that, in his later life, he wrote about them his famous psalm of twenty-three pages which is known to the Japanese as *ZŌHO-ZOKIO*. Again, it is said that in preaching he constantly referred to them, particularly speaking of one which had been extraordinarily thoughtful of its blind mate.

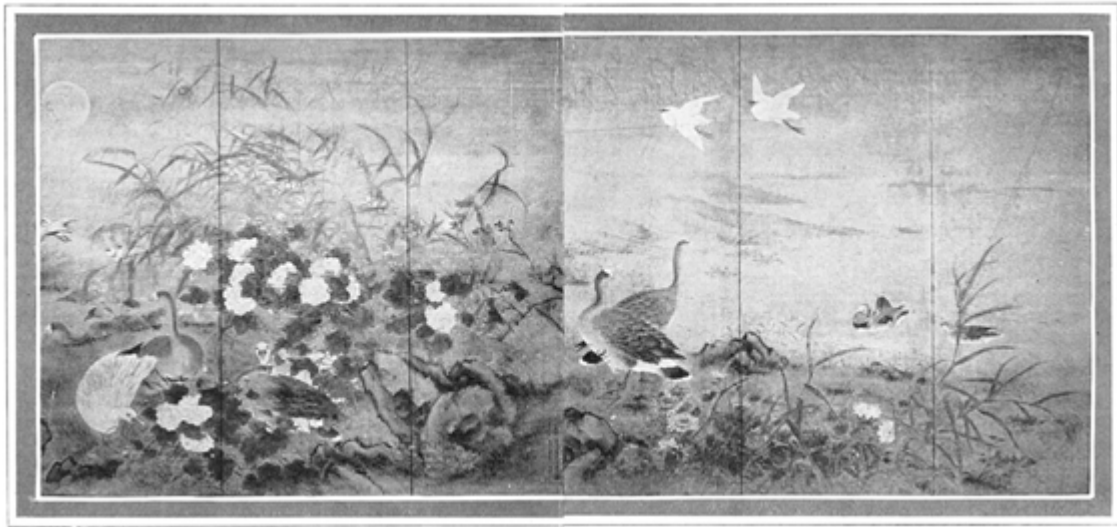
Another legend states that Amida Buddha frequently assumed the form of the *oshi-dori* to teach mankind the lessons of kindness and consideration.

Similar stories of a secular nature are also quite common. One is told of a falconer named Sanjō who, while hunting, saw a pair of *oshi-dori* on the river. He knew it was sinful to kill these birds, but, being hungry, he shot at them, killing the male, while the female escaped. That night he dreamed that there appeared to him a beautiful woman who had a most mournful and accusing manner and, on the following day, as he approached the river, the escaped duck swam before him; but, as he gazed at her, to his surprise, she suddenly tore open her breast with her beak. Sanjō was so remorseful that he shaved his head and became a priest.



From a painting by Keinen. *Oshi-dori*

Another relates to a duck's distress at the disappearance of her mate which had been stolen. She sat disconsolately in a corner, refusing food and drink as well as neglecting the care of her person. In this condition she was importuned by another drake, but she would have none of him, and was later rewarded by the return of her lord. Her joy was unbounded, and she at once told him of the advances which had been made to her during his absence. He thereupon forthwith sought out the culprit and killed him.



From a screen-painting by Kwatei Taki. An Autumnal Evening

The wild duck, known as *kamo*, likewise symbolizes the qualities of conjugal felicity and is a favourite subject among painters and colour print designers, as shown by the illustrations of Ōkyo and Hiroshige.

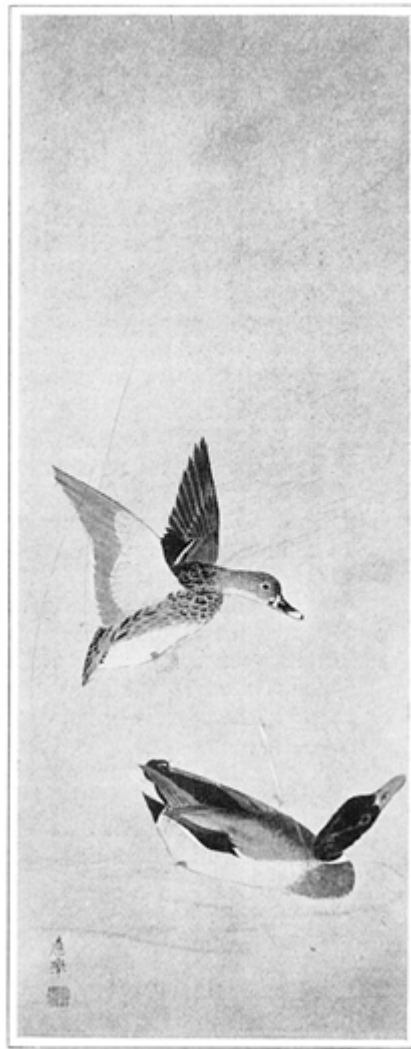
The Hindus also have such a pair of fowl known as the Brâhmanic duck and its mate, the *chahwa*. These birds once were lovers and, separated by fate, they became changed into ducks. But, unfortunately, still apart, being on opposite sides of the Ganges river, they sadly call to each other all through the night across its dark and gloomy waters.





From a colour print by Hiroshige. *Kamo*

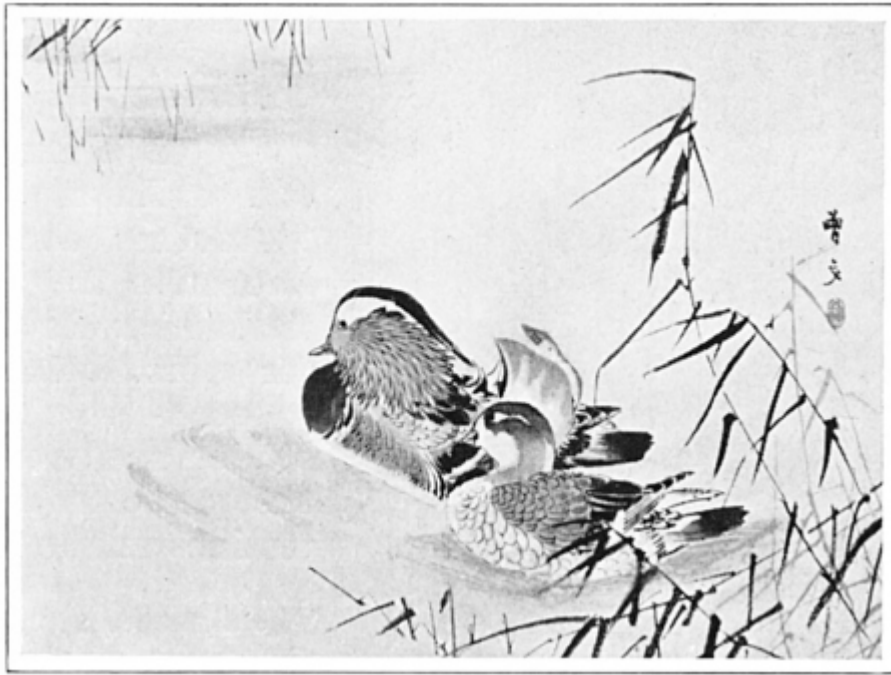
The duck, likewise, figures in superstitions. For example, in China, when the sixtieth anniversary of a deceased person is celebrated, in addition to the customary offering, there is placed on the table a large bowl of water in which is floated the shell of a duck's egg. In this is put an image of a duck made of bamboo splints covered with painted papers and supporting an image of a human figure, similarly made. The latter represents the deceased, the duck his steed, and the eggshell the boat provided for his use.



From a painting by Ōkyo. *Kamo*

Then, again, in some localities in China, the duck is tabooed as food. This is accounted for by a tradition the mother of the god Han g-yüan Shu-yü was cured of a severe distemper by eating herbs which a duck brought to her daily during her illness.

The Chinese often wear, as a protection against drowning, a duck-shaped amulet known as the “sacred duck” which had its origin in the following legend:



From a painting by Sōbun. *Oshi-dori*

The daughter of a mandarin of high rank fell into the Yangtse-kiang river and came near drowning. After she had come up to the water's surface the third time, a drake mysteriously appeared and dived after her, returning with her on its back. Ever since, the people in this vicinity have endowed this fowl with a magical power over water. This amulet is especially valued as a protection against every kind of accident. It is always worn by the boatmen who are obliged to drag their craft by ropes over the Dragon Falls, a feat which necessitates their climbing over precipitous rocks to reach the upper waters; for although these men climb like goats, should they be so unfortunate as to slip, they would fall a hundred feet and be drowned. Two illustrations of this amulet are herewith shown, one of hard stone several centuries old, and another of a gold lacquered compound of ground sandal-wood and the ashes of incense, of a later date. In the latter, the duck reposes on a lotus leaf, showing its connection with Buddhism.



From a painting by Ōkyo. *Oshi-dori*

Buckles for girdles are frequently seen made of jade and other materials in which two ducks are represented with necks interlinked. They are usually entwined by lotuses, the use of which is explained by the double significance of the word *lien*, which means both “lotus” and “partnership.”



From a colour-print by Hiroshige. *Oshi-dori*

The Japanese, also, have a traditional legend pertaining to this fowl. It relates that a king, with a very mean disposition, became very angry at the *oshi-dori* for littering up the waters of a river adjoining his palace, and ordered them to be driven away and killed. Shortly after this edict, a son was born to his wife and, to his horror, the child was covered with duck feathers. Then he realized the import of his cruel act and, to make amends, he ordered a great feast to be given on the river, to which he invited all the feathered tribes of that region. He spared no pains nor expense in making the place attractive and offered his guests every known avian delicacy. This was said to have appeased the offended fowl, for the next child that was born to him was extraordinarily beautiful.





From a painting by Sotatsu

Another characteristic of the duck, unknown to the West, is its fighting propensities, which the ancient annals state were used for sport, for duck contests were as common as cock-fights, special varieties of the fowl having been bred for this purpose. To this the scribe Tz'ü Hung of the Chin dynasty testifies in the following poem:

The fighting spirit is inherent in all animals, even those as gentle as the wild duck.  
Though it has the semblance of the phoenix and the pheasant, it also is fond of war like the hawk and the falcon.  
It has white feathers as pure as fresh snow, a red crest as beautiful as silken tassels.  
Though it walks and moves slowly, in a contest its action is swift as if attacking a foe.  
But when the battle is over, it instantly resumes its quiet demeanour.

It is trained for such fighting, and appears to enjoy the fray; but for what do the poor birds risk their lives?



From a colour-print by Keisai Yeisen. The Lure of the Moon

It is also recorded by Chung-wu Chi-wên that Lu-lu Wang saw a tributary official carry a number of fighting ducks to the Emperor. These birds were much prized, for they had been trained continuously for three years for the sport of duck fighting, and were most intelligent, ever responding when called by their names.

The wild goose, known in Japan as *gan*, figures quite extensively in the pictorial arts, the most popular theme in Japan being the Flight of the Wild Geese Across the Moon. This favourite subject owes its origin to the fact that the wild geese come in autumn when the rice is ripe, a season when the moon is most beautiful, hence the association. It is herewith beautifully portrayed in the illustration by Keisai Yeisen. In the other colour print by Sugakudō, the bird is not a wild goose but another waterfowl known as the *shigi*, which also seeks the moon and has the reputation of flying with great swiftness.

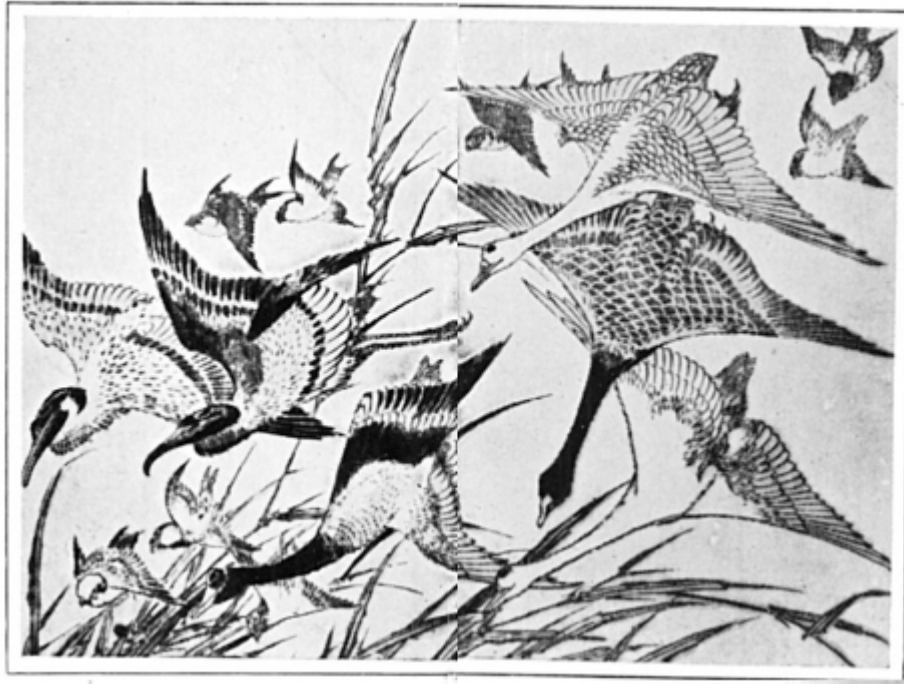
The wild geese, during their flight, have a singular cry by which their approach is announced and, since their coming in the autumn is always anticipated with much interest and pleasure, the waiting for their arrival is likened unto the suspense entertained while expecting a message from some loved one; hence the proverb *Kari no oto zure*, "the sound message of the wild geese."



From a painting by Shikō

These fowl are believed also to be attracted as strongly by the moon as moths are by a flame, and their flight toward it proceeds swiftly in long rhythmic lines producing a most beautiful picture. This habit for centuries has appealed alike to painter and poet, for a thousand years old is the following:

“The moon on an autumn night makes visible the very number of wild geese flying past with wings intertwined in the clouds.”



From a woodcut by Hokusai

Quite frequently the flight proceeds in two separate lines diverging from a leader. This procedure is particularly true when the birds are preparing to attack a foe, and only when surprised by some unexpected presence or circumstance are these lines broken. In illustration of this, a legend is told of Kiyowara Takenori who, just before the battle of Toriume, was warned of the position of his enemy, Abe no Sadato, by a broken line of *gan*.

Another story of like import is told of Hachiman Tarō, also known as Yoshiie, who, while marching against Kanazawa during the war with Takehira, saw a flock of wild geese, about to alight on the ground, suddenly break, then reform and resume their flight, which manœuvres informed him of the presence of his foe lurking in ambush amongst the grass.

This particular double line file made by the flying geese, known as *gankōryojin*, was actually adopted for warfare by the Japanese, and a full description of the method and its use is given in a valuable work by a writer named Songo.



From a colour-print by Sugakudō

Wild geese are often represented among the rushes or shown, not only flying with a reed in their beaks, but floating on one on the waters. For it has been observed that, when a goose becomes weary, it is apt to drop the reed and then light upon it. Not only painters, but poets as well, have been attracted by the habits of these fowl, while their long flights during the migratory season in particular have frequently given rise to such poetic fancies as the following:

What bark impelled by autumn's freshening gale,  
Comes speeding toward me?  
'Tis the wild geese  
Driven across the fathomless expanse of heaven  
And lifting up their voices for a sail.

And, again, not only their flight across the heavens, but their descent to the earth, is a favourite subject. As they come down headward with spread wings before alighting, they shoot up with a graceful sliding movement like an aeroplane, making a picture which likewise has inspired artists to the production of such works as are herewith shown in the given illustrations by Shikō, Hokusai, and Hiroshige.

Among the traditional subjects in Japan, the Alighting of the Wild Geese at Katata is familiar to every schoolboy of the nation. Katata, being situated on a lake adjoining rice-fields, offers a special attraction to fowls in the autumn when the grain is ripe, hence they come in great numbers.





From a colour-print by Hiroshige

This subject is one of a series, the *Ōmi Hak-kei*, “The Eight Delights of Lake Biwa.” Omi was the ancient name of Biwa and *Hak-kei* means “Eight Views.” One of the most noted sets of Hiroshige’s colour prints represents this series, which consists of the following:

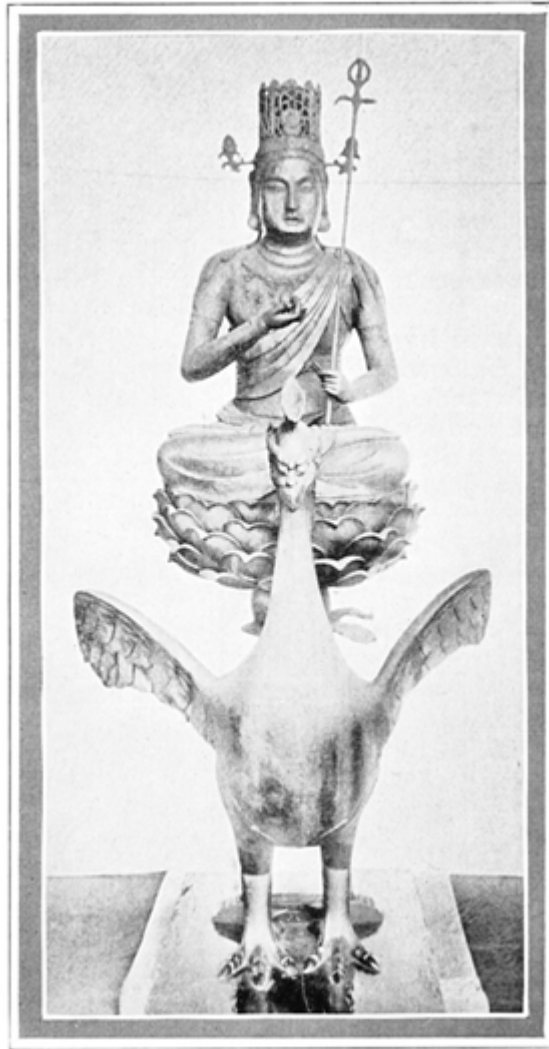
- The autumn moon seen from Ishiyama.
- The evening glow at Seta.
- The evening bell of Miidera.
- The evening snow on Hirayama.
- The night rain in Karasaki.
- The boats sailing from Yabase.
- The wild geese alighting at Katata.
- The light breeze at Awazu.

That the idea of Eight Delights of an unusually picturesque place was borrowed from China is evident from a set of eight paintings owned by the British Museum. They were done by an unknown artist of the Ming dynasty, and are listed as follows:

- A snowy evening in Koten.
- The descent of the wild geese upon the marshes.
- A rainy night at Shōsho.

An evening walk by the river in Shōko.  
A spring morning in Shiken.  
The verdure clothes the earth and mounts to the heavens.  
The temple bell peals through the mists of evening.  
The snow reposes upon the snowy mount.

The *Omi Hak-kei* are frequently combined in one composition, particularly in *kakemono*, while the separate subjects are found in all the arts.



From Japanese wooden image. Kokuzō

In China, the wild goose, known as *yen*, particularly represents the *Yang* principle of masculinity and light in nature. It is said to follow the sun in its winter course toward the south and shows, in its migrations, an instinctive knowledge of the time of the seasons. And, like the duck, being found in pairs, it also is used as one of the symbols of matrimony, in consequence of which it appears in many forms among the betrothal and wedding gifts.



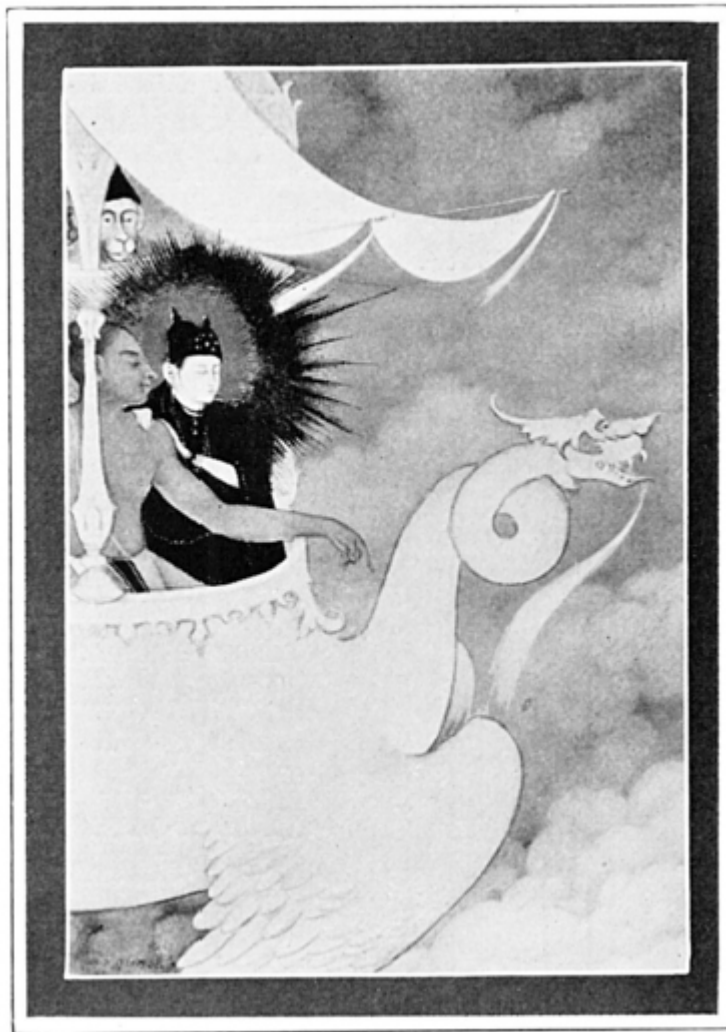
From Japanese wooden sculptures. The Five Kokuzō

Again, according to proverbial lore, *Yü yen wang lai*, “The coming and going of fish and geese,” it is associated with a means of conveying a message, or a correspondence. This proverb was derived from an event in which an emperor of the Han dynasty, while hunting in his park, killed a wild goose. It had attached to one of its feet a piece of cloth, upon which were inscribed the words, “Su Wu and his companions are confined in the marsh at Hsiung-nu.” The monarch at once sent troops to investigate this locality and found the party of prisoners who had long been believed to be dead.



From a Chinese lacquer. The Sacred Duck.

Following the current idea that the West and the East are antipodal to each other, and so frequently represent opposites, it is not strange that while the goose in the Occident is regarded as the very embodiment of stupidity, in China it is the symbol of intelligence, and the caution born of it. And again, in India, it—or the particular fowl known as the *hansa* —is the symbol of erudition.



From a Hindu painting by Venkatappa. The Return of Rama

Concerning this fowl there are many opinions; the Hindus themselves speak of it as a swan, but writers differ, some agreeing with this, while others call it a goose, and still others claim it to be a variant from creature, embodying the qualities of a number of aquatic fowl.

It is more likely a particular species in which nature equated the goose and swan, combining with modifications the characteristics of both, in which form it appears when found in the graphic arts. At any rate, this bird, like all the peregrinating fowl, calls at night by vowel sounds, and when angry hisses; and since the hissing aspirate combined with the vowel is the beginning of words, and since words are the vehicle for the expression of knowledge, the *hansa* has become the symbol of learning.



From a Hindu painting. Sarasvatī

It has therefore become invested with profound meaning partly derived from the analysis of its name; for *han* signifies “I am” and *sa* “that,” implying the Self-Existent Being. Again, in the allegory, when it was given a mixture of milk and water, it separated them, drinking the milk and leaving the water, showing an inherent wisdom, since the milk represents spirit and the water matter. It was an important symbol among sacred things when the world was in darkness and Divine Wisdom was beyond the reach of man. Its perpetual wakefulness led to its being credited as a vigilant guard. For, in the *Vedantic* texts it is said, “Every creature but the *hansa* is at rest, as night separates living creatures from the sun.” This characteristic is referred to in the hymn of the *ATHARVA VEDA* which is used as a charm against snake poison, and reads as follows:

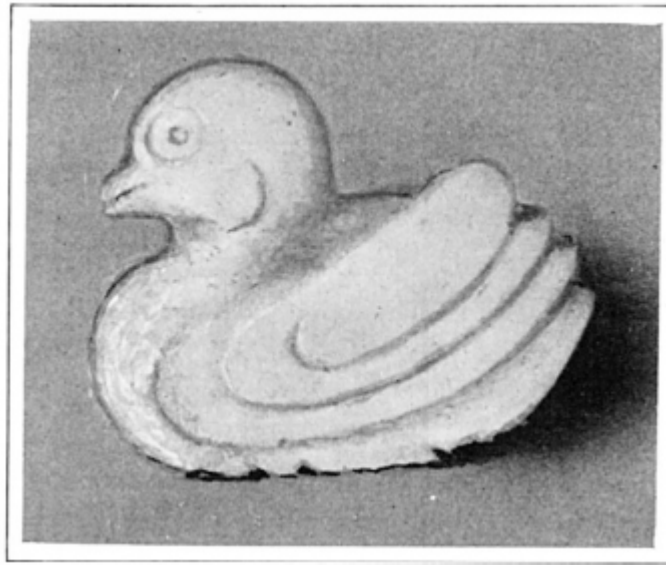
As the sun goes round the heavens,  
I have surrounded the race of serpents.  
As night puts to rest all animals,  
Except the *hansa* bird, thus do I,  
With this charm, ward off the poison.





From a Hindu painting by Mazumdar. Pamayanti and the Swan

It is also sometimes held to be the symbol of the sun, while again it is thought to be a relic of ancient cock worship and to have a totemic origin, for in the ancient books of India there is described a range of mountains located north of the fabulous Mount Mêru, called Hansa; and, again, in the BHĀGAVATĀ PITRĀNA, mention is made of a caste par excellence which is distinguished by the name of *Hansa*.



From a Chinese stone-carving. The Sacred Duck

Writers of Indian lore refer to this fowl as the Brāhmanic goose because it is said to be the *vāhan* of Brahmā, it being the goose which Vishnu sent to awaken the wearied Brahmā when he rested after his The Sacred Duck toilsome days of the creation. Representations of Brahmā on the goose do not seem to exist, but Sarasvatī, Brahmā's spouse, is sometimes depicted riding a *hansa* which, from the growths on the neck—as shown in an accompanying illustration—is the mythical and divine Goose of Learning. Sarasvatī's *vāhan* is ordinarily the peacock, and only after she was born into a new spiritual life was she privileged to use the *hansa*.

The Brāhmanic goose is also found in Tibet, where, as *nursmrig*, it retains all its Indian significance of recluseness and devotion. It is commonly seen topping the tall masts which support the prayer flags, the streaming banners, and the long paper cylinders upon which are inscribed pious sentences.

This mythical lore, born of Brahmānism, and perpetuated in Buddhism, migrating to many countries is found in Japan portrayed in the *Bod-hisattva*, Goyō Kokuzō, who rides the crested fowl. She is one of the *Go Dai* Kokuzō, who are impersonations of the spiritual body of Buddha.

Kokuzō, the Hindu Ākāśa-garbha, is the infinitely wise female deity who dwells in space, hence the appellation attached to her as the "sky-womb." She symbolizes the union of wisdom and compassion, the two cardinal virtues of Buddha. For each of her five manifestations she uses a different animal for a *vāhan*, but wears the same pentagonal crown, significant of the fivefold wisdom which is all-inclusive. In the accompanying illustrations of the Japanese wooden sculptures of the Five Kokuzō, the Goyō is the second from the left, her mount being quite different from that of the deity on her left, which is distinctly a peacock.

The Goyō is also shown separately in an adjoining illustration. These statues are owned by the Kwanchi-in temple of the Kyōōgokukuji monastery, Kyoto. They were brought to Japan in the year 847 from the monastery of Ching-lung Ssu of Hsiang, China, by the monk Ê-wên. They are of hard, dark wood, more than half life-size, and are regarded as one of the finest examples of this period, being a Chinese modification of a Hindu type. The animals upon which the figures sit are quite suggestive of bronze, and recall the early southern animal sculptures in clay and metal.

The representation of the *hansa* in the Goyō Kokuzō is unquestionably a mythical creature, for it has an animal's face, wings in lieu of ears, and a head ornament having the significance of the *ushnīsha*, the protuberance on the skull of Buddha, which is regarded as the receptacle of the divine *mana*.

The Egyptians also revered the goose. They had a goose-goddess by the name of Bes-bes, who was known as the great cadder of Nekekur. It was she who laid the egg of life; hence, the goose was not only an object of adoration in the temples, but an article of diet, for there prevailed a belief that from the eating of it they derived mental vigour.

Both Greece and Rome also had their sacred geese. The esteem in which they were held by the former nation may be estimated from the following, written by Pliny: "One might almost be tempted to think these creatures have an appreciation of wisdom, for they are the constant companions of the peripatetic philosopher Laeydes, and would never leave him, either in public or in the bath, by night or by day."

And Rome, likewise, entertained a deep feeling for these fowl; for, according to tradition, these ever-wakeful creatures by their cackling saved the Eternal City when the enemy, expecting to take the city by surprise, was making its way over the fortifications.

The swan, like the goose, has much of ancient lore attached to it. From time immemorial it has been credited with the power of prophecy, enchantment, and transformation. In India, swans are believed to be the *apsara*, "celestial dancing girls," and the *gandharva*, "celestial choristers," changed into the likenesses of birds. And in the MAHĀ-BHĀRATĀ it is said that the *rishi* frequently take the form of a swan to convey a divine message.

The swan also figures in Teutonic traditions, where it was given great intelligence. In the Norse myths, the fierce and warlike Valkyrie transformed themselves into swans and flew through the air with Odin, being known as his swan maidens. By night, their screams, mingling with the tumult of the storm, were said to have been the noises caused by their hurrying with the god to the battle-field. Again, the great white clouds that sail so majestically overhead are believed to be swans that shed dew-down into the vales below.

In Egypt, according to Hors Apollo, an ancient minstrel was portrayed by a swan, for the Egyptians claimed that, when the bird was old, it sang the sweetest of melodies. In Greece, however, it was regarded as voiceless, until the approach of death, when it broke into a beautiful song. Or, according to one writer, "The swan expires with the notes of its dying hymn."

Shakespeare was called "The sweet swan of Avon"; and in "Othello" he referred to the bird in this connection:

I will play the swan  
And die in music.

And again, in "King John," he has written:

'Tis strange that death should sing.  
I am the cygnet to this pale faint swan,  
Who chants a doleful hymn to his own death,  
And from the organ pipe of frailty sings  
His soul and body to their lasting rest.

Byron also wrote in his "Don Juan," "While, swan-like, let me sing and die"; and Coleridge likewise refers to the bird, but in a somewhat different vein:

Swans sing before they die; 'twere no sad thing  
Did certain persons die before they sing.

This so-called singing of the bird, it is said, is not a vocal performance, but a sound produced involuntarily by the breezes playing through its wings. It was, furthermore, a Pythagorean notion that the souls of poets reappear as swans, still retaining all their powers of harmony.

## CHAPTER XXXII

# THE CROW AND THE SNOWY HERON

*“To talk to the crows of the white heron.”*



From a painting by Chiura

ONE of the most notable examples of the persistence, through the centuries to the present time, of the ancient Chinese symbol, the *Yang* and *Yin*, or the *In-yō* of the Japanese, is the combination of the crow and the white heron in the graphic arts of the Orient.

These two birds, so different in appearance and characteristics—one black, mischievous, and noisy, the other white, serious, thoughtful, and silent—very fitly lend themselves, not only as symbols of this ever-dominating principle of opposites—such as good and evil, day and night, light and dark—but as beautiful units of contrast for pictorial and decorative compositions.

The East Indians also—according to *THE BOOK OF GOOD COUNSELS*, translated from the Sanskrit by Sir Edwin Arnold—discovered the qualities of these two birds, and associated them in legend to illustrate the tenets of their doctrine.

Their “Story of the Heron and the Crow” relates that a weary traveller stopped to rest under a peepul tree, upon which a heron and a crow resided together. The man fell asleep, and the kindly heron spread his wings to protect him from the glaring sun; but the depraved crow, ever seizing an opportunity for sport, dropped an unwelcome morsel into the open mouth of the snoring man, and then in glee flew away to enjoy his joke. The traveller—so unpleasantly startled from his slumber, and angry at the affront—saw only the heron, and believing him to have been the culprit, forthwith fitting his arrow, shot him dead.

From this the counsellor moralizes as follows:

With evil people neither stay nor go.  
The heron died for being with the crow.

That the Japanese thought along the same lines is quite evident from the common aphorism: “*Tareka sagi to Jcarasu no koku bijaku o towan*” “Wherefore is the crow black and the heron white.”

The crow—known in China as *wu ya*, and in Japan as *karasu*—is most intimately related to the sun. Ch’un Ch’iu in an ancient poem says: “The spirit of the sun is a crow with three legs,” while

again Huai Nan-tzū, an ancient philosopher, explains that this crow has three legs because the number three is the emblem of *Yang*, of which the sun is the supreme essence. The three legs of this fabulous bird undoubtedly have the same significance as that of the three legs of the sacred toad, the moon deity, Ch'an Ch'u, described in [Chapter XXIII](#). Both of these fabulous creatures likewise are symbolical of longevity, for they are frequently seen depicted carrying the *ling chih*, "fungus of longevity."

The Chinese, it would appear, actually believed in the existence of a three-legged crow, for in the official history of the Wei dynasty, third century A.D., it is related that "more than thirty times, tributes, consisting of three-legged crows, were brought from the neighbouring countries." But the Chinese sun-bird, called the *yang wu*, and commonly referred to as the "golden bird," is not black but red and, notwithstanding that it is called a crow—when found in the ancient arts, particularly those of tapestry and embroidery—it has the appearance of a cock, not only in the shape of its body but also in its possession of a cock's comb.



From a woodcut by Koryūsai. The Midday Meal

That it should really be a cock and not a crow seems quite logical on account of the close association of the cock with the sun; however, it is also contended that the crow has a claim to sun relationship, since it ever challenges the cock for the privilege of proclaiming the dawn.





From a painting by Kohō

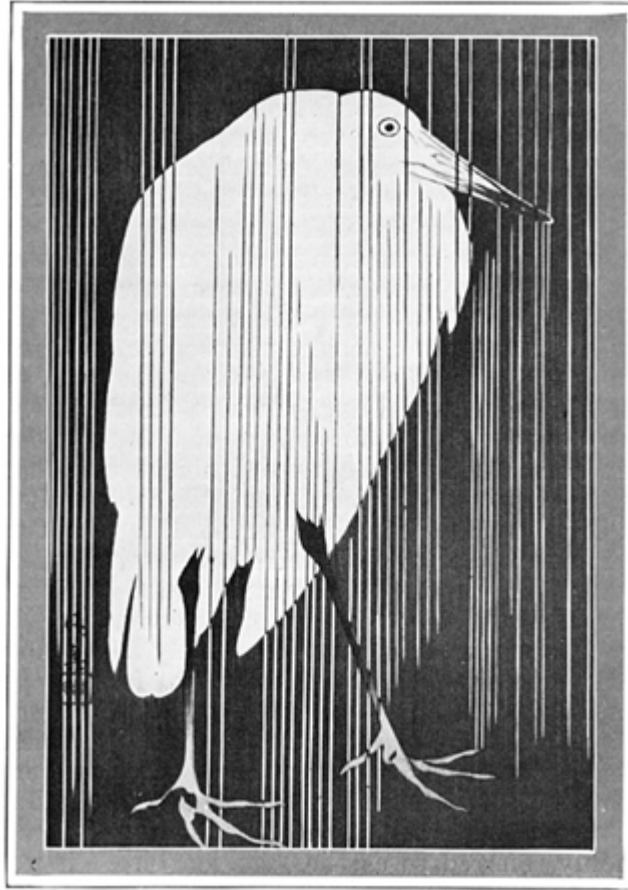
The Chinese regarded the crow as a bird of ill omen, first, because of its colour—black being a *Tin* colour—and then on account of its shrill cry of *ka-ka-ka*, which they interpreted as significant of malice, since an ideograph of the same sound meant “to bite.” However, quite the reverse of this, there is a proverb to the effect that “the crow’s voice is harsh but its heart is good.” This may refer to a different species of the bird, for the Chinese speak of a white-necked crow which they hold in high esteem because it is said that at one time it rendered an important service to the nation.



From a painting by Kyōsai. Crow, Moon and Plum Blossoms

Then, again, there is the legendary pure white crow to which historical reference is made in the LIANG SHU. In this, it is recorded that there was an emperor who particularly fancied it, and made every effort to possess as many as possible, since he regarded it as a most auspicious bird.

There is a belief in the existence of a pure white crow among the American Indians—an idea which also was held by the primitives of Europe—claiming that the crow originally was white but suffered a change of colour in punishment for some misdemeanour.



From a woodcut by Kiyoōku. The Evening Rain

This white crow, however, may be none other than the bird known as “Pharaoh’s chicken,” a sort of vulture of such very light colour that it is called white, and which the colonists in Africa have dubbed “the white crow.”



From a woodcut by Morikuni

From time immemorial the Chinese court and army used banners adorned with figures founded on astrological lore. Among these the sun with its three-legged crow and the moon with its hare were given special prominence because the Emperor, as the son of Heaven, regarded one as his elder brother and the other as his sister.

The Japanese adopted this entire Chinese system about the seventh century, the official annals incidentally recording its uses in A.D. 700. But while, when first imported, the sunbird retained all the original characteristics, judging from illustrations still extant, it was eventually displaced by the familiar black crow, which, however, was given the three legs of the original. Then, in the course of time, while the sun and moon banners were still retained as Imperial insignia, their fabulous inmates were dropped and a rising sun was substituted for the Chinese emblem.



From a painting by Biho



From a woodcut by Hokusai. Three Emblems of Purity

Later, as in 1859, when there arose the necessity for a national flag to correspond with those of other nations, the Sun Banner was utilized. Its emblem, the sun, however, was converted into a sixteen-petalled chrysanthemum, the solar rays being symbolized by the petals of the flower, and the number sixteen being selected for geomantic reasons.

That the sun should be Nippon's national standard is quite consistent, since sun worship was its earliest religion. So deeply impressed has been the reverence for this golden orb that even to-day its influence lingers; for, when the sun has been hidden by the clouds for an unusual length of time, at its reappearance the people rush into the open, and ardently supplicate it in the belief that from it they derive all their sources of life.

The principal deity of sun worship was Amaterasu-ō-Mikami, from whom the Imperial family traces its descent. This divinity, referred to in [Chapter XXX](#), had as her messenger and attendant the *yatagarasu*, which, like the Chinese *yang wu*, is a red bird having three legs and eight hands—as its name implies—and dwells with her in the sun.

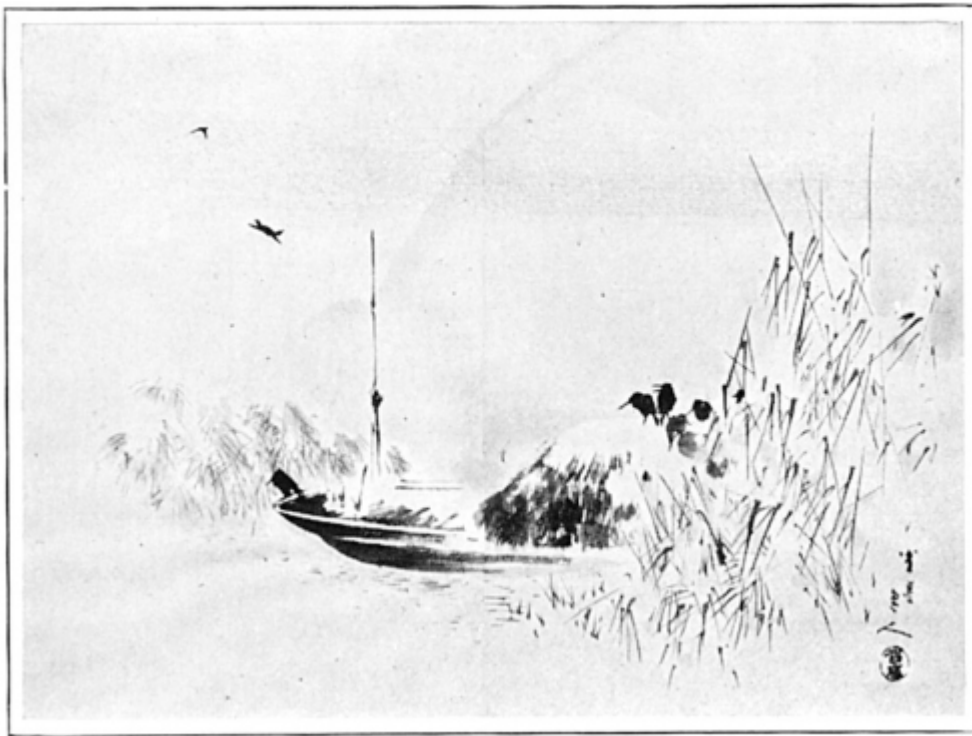


From a woodcut by Koryūsai. The Contrasting Pair

It is related that when Jimmu Tennō, the celebrated colonist, with whom the historical legend of Japan begins, was waging a war with the aborigines, the gods not only supplied him with a divinely tempered sword, but Amaterasu herself appeared to him in a dream, and told him she would send her *yatagarasu* to guide him through the land. Thereupon this huge mythical being, reputed to have been eight feet tall, descended from the Great Void, and triumphantly led the Yamato troops to victory.

In the light of more recent times, however, this *yatagarasu* is believed to have been none other than one of Jimmu Tennō's generals, whose name happened to be Yatagarasu, and whose strategy and valour was such as to make his movements appear miraculous. That some credence is placed upon this assertion is quite evident from the fact that a prominent family in Japan claims this general as an ancestor, and a shrine in his honour is mentioned in the *ENGISHI-KI*.





From a painting by Shōtei. Crows in a Snow Scene

In the graphic representations of Jimmu Tennō he always carries a staff with a golden bird from which emanate rays as from the sun. Regarding the nature of this bird, as well as that which adorns the *Kinshi Kunshō*, “the medal of honour,” bestowed upon warriors for meritorious service, there are different versions, some authorities claiming it to be a golden falcon, and others the golden sun-crow.

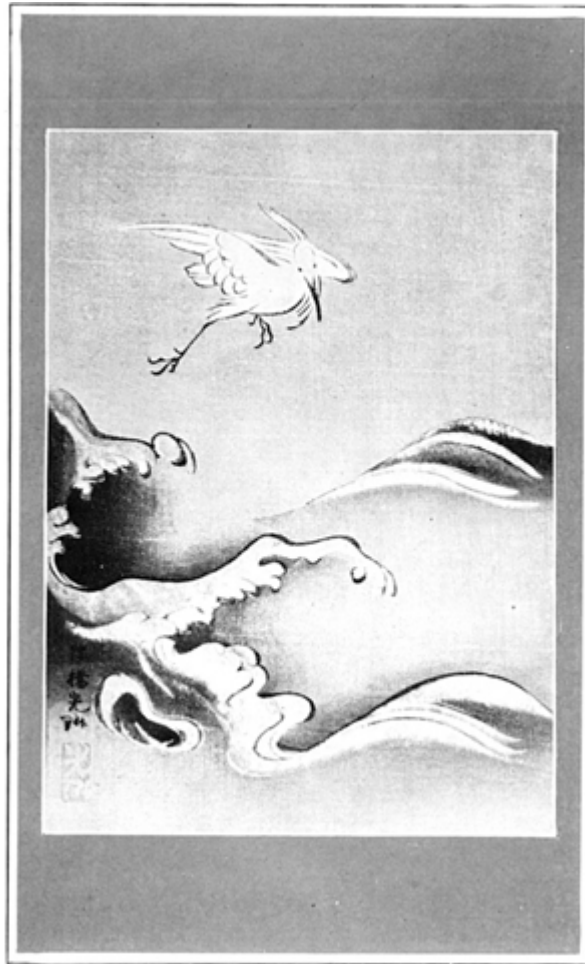


From a paint-Kanō The Saintly Heron in Deep Meditation

The crow's connection with Shintōism is further proven, not only by its presence about the temples, but also by its name having been given to them. Among the celebrated shrines of Ise there is one, situated in a pine grove on the seashore, known as *Karasu Gozen no Yashiro*, “The Crow's Temple.” This is dedicated to Waka-hirume, also called Ori-hime, “The Weaving Maiden,” who is a

younger sister of the sun goddess and, by virtue of this relationship, is entitled to the service of the crows.

It is, however, at the Kumano shrines located in the same vicinity that these birds are best known. Here they are called the “holy crows” because they are believed to be the messengers of the Kumano *Gongen*, “deities,” and in return enjoy protection in the vicinity of the sacred precincts. For this reason they undoubtedly are used as a distinctive decoration on the *ofuda*, “honorary sacred pictures,” distributed to pilgrims at the Kumano shrines. They also appear as an architectural ornament on many of the subsidiary temples dedicated to the Kumano deities, a well-known example being the one in Megura, Tōkyō.



From a painting by Kōrin. In Search of Small Game

Regarding these Kumano crows there is quite an amusing tale told. This relates that on account of the temples of Kumano and Kōya-san being located on high mountains at some distance from each other, the monks of Kōya-san, when desiring some of the exceptionally fine *tqfu*, “bean-curd,” made at Kumano, placed on their temple balustrade copper coins which the crows took away in exchange for the bean-curd they carried there from Kumano.

The wisdom and intelligence of the crow is proverbial. Among many peoples it is credited with magical powers, hence it is frequently associated with sorcerers, who use it in all concoctions of witchery, particularly appropriating its brains as a remedy against old age, and its heart to imbue themselves with the spirit of prophecy. It is thought to have but one eye, which it shifts from cavity to cavity, a habit generally regarded as characteristic of deceit and knavery. Among the entire feathery

tribe it is an outcast, for in addition to being a scavenger, it has the reputation of stealing, and hiding and hoarding its loot.



From a painting by Gyokuclen. Herons in a Snow Scene

In India there is a tradition that the dead return as crows; hence, to give food to these birds is equivalent to making an offering to the manes. The Japanese not only likewise entertain this belief, but have a number of other superstitions as well regarding this dusky creature. For example, if a crow lights on a house and caws sorrowfully it is believed that a calamity is sure to befall it, but if the cawing is the joyful “carrow” it is an auspicious omen. Again, should a nest be destroyed by its occupant, as is sometimes the case, a fire is predicted in the vicinity within three days.

On the other hand, the crow supplies one of the greatest examples of filial piety in the animal world, for the young always devote the first three months, after they are able to fly from the nest, to feeding and caring for the mother, thereby repaying her for her trouble of rearing them.

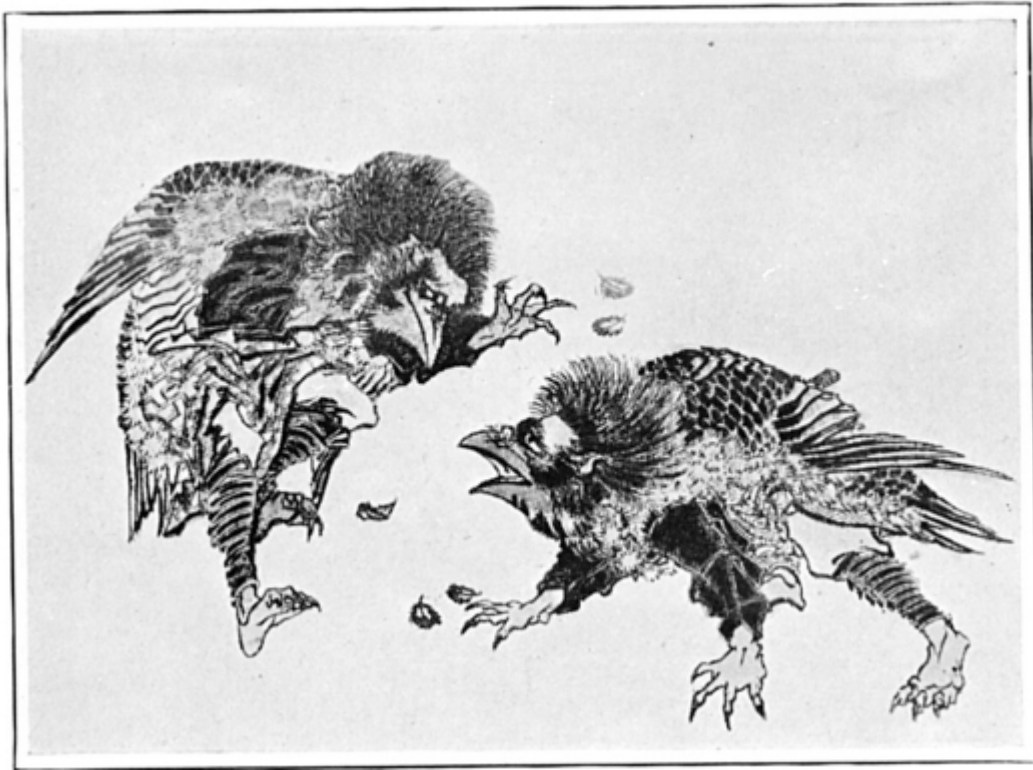
They also have a remarkably strong community spirit and unite in destroying a common enemy or in protecting one of their own kind, to the rescue of which they will go at the slightest sign of alarm. Upon one occasion the crows annoyed a foreigner living in Tokyo by destroying his garden. They would deliberately pull up the flowers and commit depredations, even to entering the house through the windows and carrying off his possessions.



From a painting by Ōkyo. About to Make a Landing

One day this gentleman caught one of them in the very act of destruction, and his exhausted patience externalized itself in a dead crow. The smoke of the revolver had hardly died away before the sky was darkened by black wings, and upon his abode there settled a dusky mantle accompanied by a noisy din of caws. All the crows in the neighbourhood had come to investigate the case, and after forcefully expressing their indignation, with drooping heads, tails and wings, they sat mourning the death of their comrade, and then suddenly disappeared, taking with them the dead crow. From that time the place was marked. Not a crow was seen in the vicinity for a year and a half.

It is generally known that crows always dispose of their dead, because such a thing as a dead crow is never seen anywhere. What they do with them is unknown. They have their little difficulties at times. If there is a quarrel, it is generally a contest to the death of one or the other, and the situation is evidently understood by the others, as there is no interference.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. *A Tengu Cock Fight*

They also enjoy playing tricks upon each other. One day a crow was seen flying about with what appeared to be a large shrimp—an article of food they consider a great delicacy, and over which they have frequent disputes for possession. He seemed to display it intentionally for the purpose of attracting attention. In this he was quite successful, for in a short time he was pursued by a large company. He led them about through the air for some time, and then descended to the ground, dropping the coveted thing. There was a general scramble, but he made his escape, and it was only when the others heard his laugh of derision from afar that they realized they had been fooled; for it was no shrimp at all, only a piece of reel rag.





From a coloured woodcut by Yeizan. Ushiwaka's Lesson in Fencing

Related to the crows is a singular race of mythical beings known as *tengu*. They have human bodies, with a covering of feathers, bird wings, and claws in lieu of hands and feet, and a bird's sharp beak, although one branch of the family has a human nose of extraordinary length. The latter class are known as *ho no ha tengu*, "leaf-clad," and the former as *karasu*, "crow" *tengu*.



From a painting by Kangyo. The Winter Flight of Tokiwa Gozen

They are small, brave, and exceedingly active. Regarding their dispositions authorities differ, some saying that they are not only harmless but friendly, and even benevolent; while others claim them to be a sort of demon responsible for most of human ills. They are believed to be endowed with supernatural powers akin to those of the fox, as they seem to have knowledge of events that occur at very great distances. They are credited with causing all conflagrations, wars, and other calamities, and are said to have a weakness for stealing children. Even at the present time when a child of the unsophisticated is lost, the parents beat their drums and make offerings of cake and tea to the *tengu* for its return.



From a coloured triptych by Overcoming Benkei Kuniyoshi. Yoshitsune on Gojō Bridge

They are thought to be able to obsess persons, causing them to become ill—as in the case of the *Shōgun* Hōjō Takatoki shown in an accompanying illustration—and to change their shapes, particularly enjoying masquerading as a priest, a nun, or even Buddha himself. In fact their chief mission appears to be to fight the Buddhist law and bring confusion into the world. Some people even regard them as the ghosts of proud, ambitious, covetous, and flattering priests, as it is claimed that all *tengu* are the incarnation of humans who are being punished for their pride. Latterly, however, they seem to have redeemed themselves, for they have become transformed into gods and made the messengers of Fudō and Kōmpira.

They are believed to live in colonies under a ruler, and to occupy the tree-tops of mountain forests, mainly in the vicinity of Kurama -yama, located a short distance from Kyoto, this having been the playground of their chief historical drama. It was here that Ushiwaka, the youthful Yoshitsune, was tutored by the *Dai Tengu*, Sōjōbō, in the arts of warfare so that he could run, jump, and fence beyond the limits of human power.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. The Troubled Dream of Hōjō Takatoki

In an accompanying illustration by Yeizan, the *tengu* ruler, shown with flowing locks and beard, sits directing a contest between the young prince and three *tengu*, while, in the illustration by Kuniyoshi, Yoshitsune, in the guise of a girl, on Gōjō bridge is making his famous leap by which he overcame the bandit monk, Benkei.

The snowy heron, known to the Chinese as *pei lu*, and to the Japanese as *sagi* or *shira sagi*, “white heron,” is also a popular theme with artists in China and Japan. This bird, which so frequently is confused with the crane by foreigners, still adorns the public parks and private gardens, or follows the labourer through the fields in anticipation of savoury, stray crumbs. In every attitude it commands admiration, whether stalking over the moor in stately mien; or calmly and in perfect grace sailing through the air; or standing mute and still among the grasses of some lakelet, inspiring such lines as:

A breeze blows o’er the lake,  
Against the heron’s slender legs  
The little ripples break.

It is this pose, resting on one leg, with head withdrawn and eyes closed, but not asleep, which led the Buddhists to name it “The Thinker,” and adopt it as a model of piety and purity; hence its combination with the lotus, “the flower of life and death.” But the epithet of the “saintly heron” “bestowed upon it has been perverted by the cynical sceptic, and given the opposite meaning in the aphorism “As saintly as a heron,” implying that while pretending to be absorbed in holy meditation, it is all the while only intent upon the next fish or frog. In this interpretation, however, the unbeliever displays his ignorance, for when the bird is bent upon a catch, it stands firmly on both feet with eyes fixed upon the quest.



From a coloured woodcut by Kuniyoshi. Tokiwa, Guided by the White Herons

Another reason for a spiritual significance being given to it is its colour, for all things white are considered pure and sacred. Hokusai in his woodcut the Three Emblems of Purity, of the given illustration, has placed this white bird on a snow-laden pine bough against the snow-clad Fuji no yama, a beautiful illustration of the classic lines:

This is the silver world  
And white is the snowy heron.



From a painting by G-yoka. The Crow and the Plum Tree

The heron is also regarded as a symbol of delicacy and tact, because it is said to “ever rise from the stream without stirring up the mud.”

The kindly disposition of the heron is exemplified in the legend relating to the flight of Tokiwa Gozen, the mother of Yoshitsune, before referred to, who while fleeing from the tyrant Kiyomori was guided through the storm by a flock of these birds.

The close relationship of the heron with the crane has erroneously led to the former sharing the symbolism of the latter, but, as has been shown, the heron is purely Buddhistic, while the crane belongs to Taoism.

The crow and the heron are sometimes included in the same composition as in the given woodcut by Koryūsai. Both birds lend themselves to snow, rain, and night subjects, although the principal associate of the crow is the sun. Again, each bird is, at times, combined with the pine tree, but ordinarily the crow is represented with the plum, and the heron with the willow. There are, however, many exceptions to this practice, as in the given illustrations of paintings by Kōrin and Okyo, where, by the former, the heron is shown with the waves and, by the latter, with aquatic plants. Among Hiroshige’s colour prints there are several of great beauty in which the heron is shown either standing among the water grasses or is about to descend upon a bed of iris.

The crow also is sometimes shown with the moon as in the painting by Kyōsai, one of the greatest delineators of the black bird. This artist not only reveals an exceptional knowledge of the character of his subject, but a poetic conception of the beauties of nature, to which the following lines, inscribed in the open space of the composition, testify:

The plum blossoms glow in the misty moonlight. With them, on the branch, broods the dusky crow; and, but for its cry, which breaks the silence of the night, its presence would not be known.

THE HEAVY WINTER SNOWS HAVE CAPPED WITH WHITE THE PINE-TREE TOPS WHERE SLEEP THE BIG BLACK CROWS.

—RIMEI

WHO CALLS ACROSS THE SNOW THIS MYSTIC MOONLIGHT NIGHT? ALAS! ‘T WAS NOTHING BUT A CROW.

—SARUSUKUI



## CHAPTER XXXIII

### THE CUCKOO AND OTHER BIRDS

*“A solitary voice!  
Did the moon cry?  
'Twas hut the hototogisu.”*



From a painting by Chiura

AMONG all the birds of Japan none has been invested with greater mysticism and romance than the *hototogisu*, “cuckoo.”

It is the size of a small hawk, with slender, spare body, and blue-grey plumage. It lives in the wilds of mountain forests, shunning the habitations of men. It is said to appear in the fifth month of the year, the rainy season and the time for planting the rice. In fact its name—which is derived from its cry, “*ho-to-to-gi-su*”—is a homophone of the Chinese characters which read “time bird.” It is sometimes referred to as the *kakko*, while the Chinese call it *k'ou hu*.

It is a bird of nocturnal habits, but only when the moon is visible just before dawn is its presence known, and then by its cry, for its flight is so swift that it is rarely seen.

Many an hour, all night long, has been given to waiting for its coming, one place in particular, the tea-house at Chausu-yama near Ōsaka, being famous for this diversion, having become the haunt of poets who have long delighted in writing *hohhu* such as the following:

When I gaze toward the place where I heard the cuckoo cry, lo! There is naught save the wan morning moon.

Its cry, which is continuous during its flight, is described as a rapid repetition of sounds which seem to vary in different sections of the country. Some claim it to be “*kakko*,” “*kakko*,” and others “*yarpo*,” “*yarpo*,” suggestive of our own familiar “cuckoo,” which, in each case, is regarded as a lament for a mate. So deep is its anguish that the tears of its mournful wail are turned to blood, as expressed by the poet:

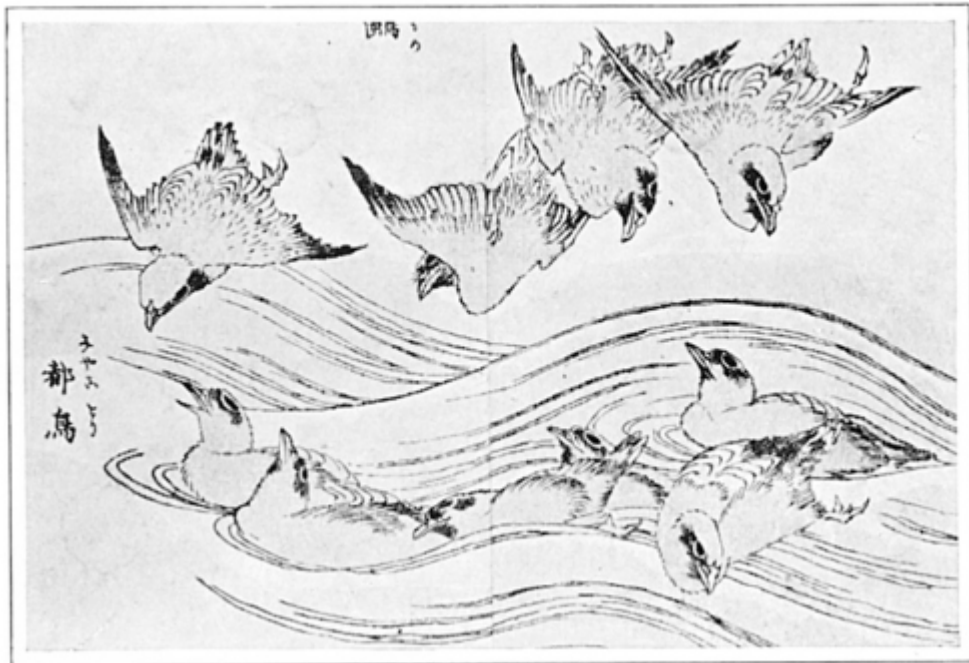
Save only the morning moon, none heard the heart's blood cry of the *hototogisu*.

Its mysterious decession, also marking the consummation of a sorrowful experience, caused it to become the symbol of an unrequited love, particularly applied to woman. It is claimed that every girl, some time, must pass through the *hototogisu* period, a belief which explains the following lines:

I would to some land  
Where there are no *hototogisu*.  
I am so melancholy  
When I hear their notes.

While this strange bird has for centuries supplied a theme to Japanese poets, it was not until the late Meiji era that it attracted the attention of writers of fiction, after having been popularized by the novelist, Rōkotōkatame, in his romance, *THE HOTOTOGISU*.

In this sad tale a young wife is separated from her husband, notwithstanding that the two were deeply in love with each other. The interests of the family demanded offspring, an impossibility on account of the illness of the wife, hence the sacrifice had to be made. So, like the mystical bird, grief-stricken, she weeps until her tears turn to blood and she dies from a haemorrhage.



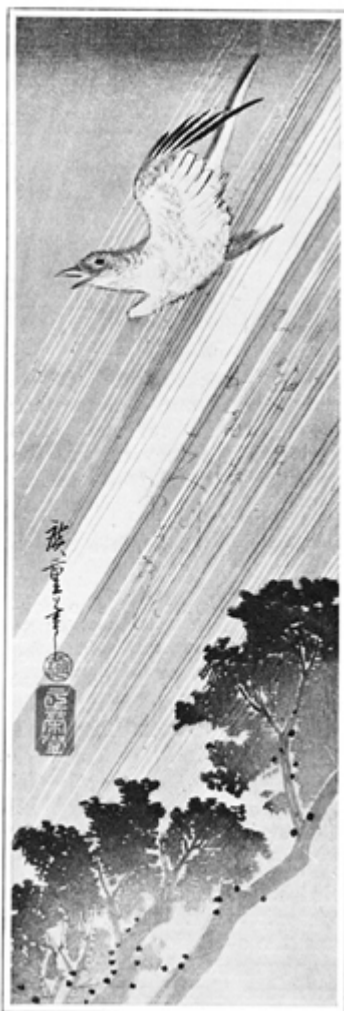
From a woodcut by Hokusai. *Chidori* and Wave

In Europe, the cuckoo was called the “Hawk of May,” and credited with growing into the real bird of abomination in August. It appears to have played a very important part among primitive peoples, who, marvelling at its strange and unnatural habits of propagation, made it a god. First, it is accused of living a life of lawless love, then of laying its eggs in other bird's nests, after having destroyed their contents. Then, on account of its indolence or lack of motherly instinct, its young are reared by foster parents whom these youthful ingrates, after attaining maturity, kill and devour.



From a painting. Shijō School. Among the Water Plants

For these reasons, many characters in the folk-lore, which had their inception in a barbarous past, were based upon cuckoo traits, particularly those who knew neither parents nor brothers and sisters. Even in Greek times, Zeus, to woo his sister for his wife, flew to her in the form of a cuckoo.



From a colour-print by Hiroshige. The Cuckoo and Rain

Another bird, of quite a different order, that has made a strong appeal to the Japanese, is their much-beloved *uguisu*, “nightingale,” to be found in every part of the empire. From the wilds of woodland forests on mountain heights; through the hilly districts to the plains; in palace gardens and temple groves—this warbler, from early February to late September, fills the air with its low flutelike tones. Indoors as well—for its beautiful carol has brought it a cage—its notes are filled with melody, and it is difficult to determine whether its song of joy in freedom or its chant of longing in confinement is the sweeter. And, not infrequently, the call from the captive attracts the free bird, when the two engage in a responsive lyric.



From a painting by Hokusai. The Swallow and Willow

To this singer and its song which ever heralds the advent of spring, for centuries, such poems as the following have been dedicated:

When winter turns to spring,  
The dews of morn in pearly radiance lie,  
The mists of eve rise circling to the sky,  
And Kaminabi's thickets ring  
With notes the nightingale doth sing.

In poetry and art the *uguisu* is combined with the *ume*, “plum blossom/” because in nature the two are so closely associated, since they both come at the same season of the year. It therefore seems but fitting that the refined warbler should be attracted by the delicate and subtle fragrance of the flower.

Illustrative of this, the celebrated Hakuten wrote the following lines, commemorating the refusal of a woman to break off a branch of her beloved plum tree at the request of a passing *claimyō*:

If the branch is broken where will the *uguisu* find a resting-place on its return?



From a woodcut. Kōrin School. The Swallow and Wave

In a similar vein are the following lines, which were written by the daughter of the famous poet, Tsurayuki, when her beloved plum tree was taken to replace one that had died in the gardens of the Imperial palace:

Claimed for our sovereign's use  
Blossoms I've loved so long,  
Can I in duty fail?  
But for the nightingale  
Seeking her home of song  
How shall I find excuse?





From a painting by Mu Ch'i. The Swallow and Willow

The Emperor, finding the poem tied on the tree, was so impressed by its sentiment that he ordered the tree to be returned to the young lady.

Again, many poems on this subject of *Ume ni Uguisu* include a reference to snow because, quite often, the plum blossoms come so early that they seem to be merging from the white mantle of winter which covers the tree branches; hence it is not uncommon to speak of these “two perfections of whiteness” interchangeably, as:

Amid the branches of the sil'vry bowers  
The nightingale doth sing. Perchance he  
knows That spring hath come, and takes the later snows  
For the white petals of the plum's sweet flowers.



From a colour-print by Hiroshige. *Chidori* and Wave

But while the joyful song of the nightingale may be regarded as the transmutation of the fragrance of the plum, it also has a solemn strain of sadness, as shown in the poet's lines, in which he refers to the snow as the bird's frozen tears:

Spring has come while yet the landscape bears  
Its fleecy burden of unmelted snows!  
Now may the zephyrs gently blow  
And melt the *uguisu*'s frozen tears.



From a painting by Kōkō-jo. The Tongue-cut Sparrow

Of greater importance, however, than its aesthetic and poetical qualities is its relationship to Buddhism, for this neutral-tinted mite is a holy bird having from time immemorial professed Buddhism, since in its song it repeats like a litany the word HOKKE-KYŌ, which is the name of the SECRET SCRIPTURES or divine book of the Nichiren sect. In consequence of this it is known as the “reading bird,” and an exponent of the faith of the *Sūtra*, of the Lotus, of the Good Law.



From a painting by Bairei. Quail

HOKKE-KYŌ is but a single word, and yet it is written, “He who shall joyfully accept a single word from the *sūtra*, incalculably greater shall be his merit than that of one who should supply all beings in the four hundred thousand *asankhyeyes* of worlds with all the necessities of happiness.”



From a painting by Mokutei. The Sparrow and Snow-laden Bamboo

Another small bird, also common to every section of Japan, is the *suzume*, “sparrow,” which, notwithstanding its restless and quarrelsome disposition, is esteemed as a symbol of loyalty. For it is

said that the little fellow constantly sings “*chu! chu!*”; and *chu* being the same sound as that for the word “loyal,” this song has been interpreted as “be loyal! be loyal!” Then, again, loyalty is a characteristic that has been observed in the relationship of the mates of this bird, for when one dies the other invariably returns to the nest alone.

It also has the reputation of being very noisy, ever chattering, so that the Japanese have a saying, “Too much talking, just like a sparrow.”

Sparrows are kept in cages at temples to be liberated at funerals as well as at weddings and festivals, always with the thought of acquiring spiritual merit.

The principal legend connected with this bird, and known to every school child in the empire, is that of *Shitahiri Suzume*, “The Tongue-cut Sparrow,” an illustration of which is herewith shown in the painting by Kōkō-jo, a woman artist.



From a painting by Kohō. Ready for the Quest

This legend relates that a sparrow unwittingly ate some starch belonging to a cantankerous old woman who, in anger, cut out its tongue and then drove it away. When its master learned of its plight, he lost no time in finding it, and the sparrow, overjoyed at seeing his benefactor and wishing to reward him, offered him the choice of two baskets, one large and heavy, and the other small and light. The modest old man chose the latter, just to find that it contained great treasure. The old woman, learning



of his good fortune and hoping to profit in the same manner, sought the bird and after many apologies for her cruel act was likewise rewarded. But she greedily chose the larger basket from which, when opened, there issued goblins and demons to avenge the sparrow.



From a painting by Katei. Quail

This saucy little creature enjoys the privilege of changing its art associate according to the season. For example, in winter subjects it is combined with the bamboo and snow, as in the accompanying illustration by Mokutei; in those of spring, summer, and autumn with the bamboo and plum, the peach, and the chrysanthemum, successively.

Another small bird, lovingly regarded by the Japanese, is the *chidori*, a sort of sea-shore plover resembling a sparrow that, in large flocks, scuds the water or flies through the ocean breakers exhibiting small pink feet. These noisy little flutterers are quite frequently alluded to by poets, while designers enjoy representing them as the transformation of the spray drops which have been tossed up by the wave. Hence the subject of *Nami ni Chidori*, “Wave and *Chidori*” which, according to occidental version, is reversed to read “*Chidori* and Wave,” as in the given colour prints by Hokusai and Hiroshige.

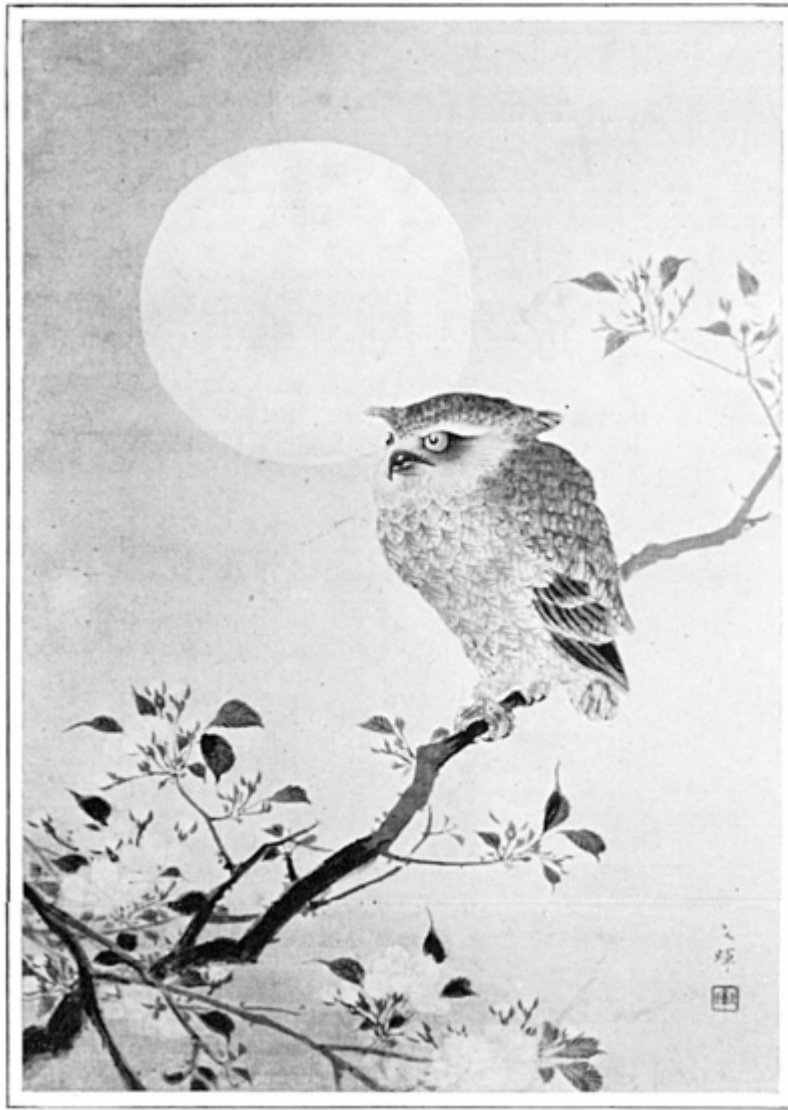


From a painting by Kōtei. Bullfinch and Bamboo Trees

The wave is also used with the swallow, a bird known to the Chinese as *yen* and to the Japanese as *tsubame*. A given illustration shows this combination in a design of the Kōrin school under the title of “The Swallow and Wave,” or, according to the Japanese, *Nami ni Tsubame*.

It is, however, with the willow that the swallow is most commonly portrayed, because it comes in the spring when the willow sends out its first shoots. Two examples of this subject, known as the *Yanagi ni Tsubami*, are given in the paintings by Mu Ch’i and Hokusai.

This shapely and graceful bird, in contrast with the sparrow, is the symbol of unfaithfulness, for it is never true to a mate, but ever in quest of a new love. It is likewise turbulent and ever ready to fight, but, notwithstanding these unworthy traits, it is said to be a good mother, for which reason it is an emblem of maternal care and domesticity.



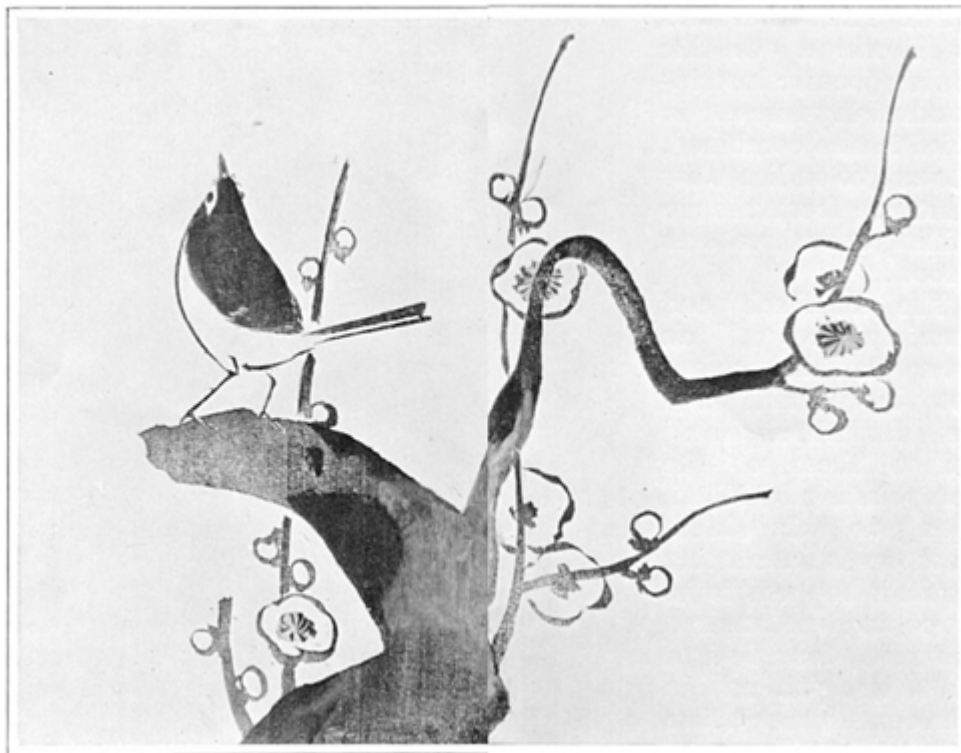
From a painting by Bunki. In a Thoughtful Mood

Among larger birds the dove or pigeon figures conspicuously. Gentle and loving, from time immemorial among all peoples it has been regarded not only as a model of connubial affection but a symbol of peace. It has ever enjoyed the distinction of a saintly disposition, although naturalists say it is fully as pugnacious as other birds.



From a colour print by Hiroshige. The Kingfisher and Iris

In the Orient, known to the Chinese as *kin* and to the Japanese as *halo*, it is endowed with additional significances. As early as the Han dynasty it became a symbol of longevity on account of its exceptional digestion. Hence, on persons celebrating an eightieth birthday was bestowed a gift of a jade stone staff upon which was engraved the image of a dove, to imply a wish that future years might be blessed with like power and consequent good health.



From a design by Korin. The Nightingale and Plum Blossom

Again, it offered a most commendable example of the deference and respect that should be shown to parents; for it had been learned that the young birds never allow themselves to sit beside their elders, but always perch on a branch below them. From it, also, was drawn a model for the relationship between the sexes, inasmuch as the male bird ever salutes its lady from a branch above her.

In addition to its other praiseworthy qualities, it is noted for its constancy and reliability as exemplified in its carrier activities. Its remarkable health, great endurance, and intelligence in ancient times in all Asiatic countries made it a most valuable vehicle of communication—the very telegraph and telephone system of the Old World.



From a painting by Furukuni. The Nightingale and Plum Blossom

In China it was thus most extensively used by merchants, and ever protected from the attacks of lurking falcons and hawks by having attached to its tail a whistle so shrill and terrifying that it frightened all marauders away.



From a painting by Furukuni

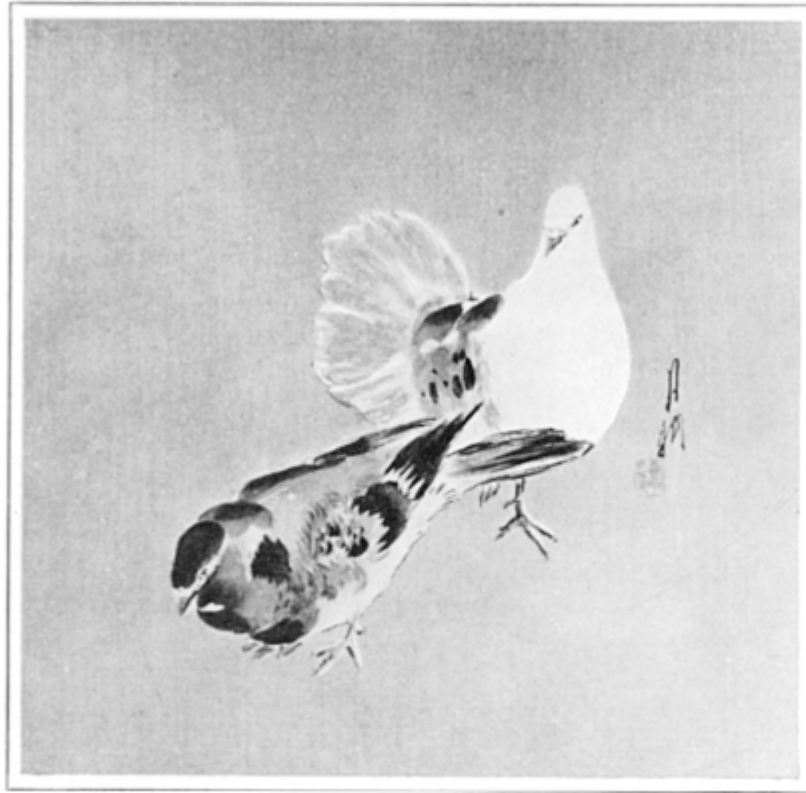
In Japan it is sacred to Hachiman, the oriental Mars, who is shown carrying it with his two-edged sword. Here, however, it is still the dove of peace, for it is only kept by the deity to announce the end of a war, when it is liberated. For this reason the doves at the shrine of the scowling Hachi-man as well as those at the temples of the benign Kwan-non have the same significance as those that are found at sacred edifices in other parts of the world.





From a colour-print by Genki. The Bullfinch and Morning-glory

The principal dove legend of Japan pertains to an event that served to shape the destiny of the nation, for it relates how Yoritomo, the founder of the Shōgunate, owed his life to two doves which flew from a hollow tree where the great Minamoto lay concealed, thereby deceiving his pursuers. Grateful for this deliverance, he and his clan became the special patron of Hachiman, to whom they erected many shrines and, incidentally, provided for the doves which had rendered them so valued a service.



From a painting by Gesshū

The owl also is a very important bird, having figured in mythological lore from the earliest traditional times, while ancient literature and art are rich in matter concerning it. This is doubtlessly due to its unusual appearance and uncanny habits. Its great round eyes which glare with a fiendish stare, its large and ill-proportioned head, high forehead, and monstrous talons, emphasized by its nocturnal habits and its association with bats, serpents, and toads on dark cliffs and in gloomy caves, caused it to have been universally regarded as a most inauspicious creature.



From a painting, by Hōyen. Plum Branch and Nightingale

Its soft and noiseless flight, swishing by so closely and disappearing in the gloom, led to the belief that it hails from the realm of darkness, whence it deports men's souls. Later this idea was responsible for its being regarded as one of the attendants of the Ten Kings of the infernal regions. Its faculty for seeing in the dark gave it the reputation of being possessed of great wisdom, hence of foretelling the future. Its terrifying screech and power to attack and kill other birds of equal size undoubtedly suggested the idea of deifying it; for it is first found as a primitive bird-god of indeterminate sex, cruel and murderous, whom to propitiate, human beings were sacrificed. Even the Etruscans worshipped it as a god of darkness, to whom captives and slaves were immolated.

In the Orient, known to the Chinese as *hsiao* and to the Japanese as *fukuro*, it is likewise an ill-omened bird, for the Chinese say its cry sounds like the digging of a grave; hence they regard it as the harbinger of death. However, it is primarily ignoble for, like the cuckoo, it is said to kill and eat its own mother, for which reason all ungrateful children are called "owls."

In the arts this dusky nocturnal offender appears emancipated from the bondage of its reputed sins, for the poet and painter see but the true and the beautiful; hence they not only represent its picturesque qualities but emphasize the mysticism of its character by combining it with the moon, as shown in the given paintings by Kohō and Bunki.

Among other traditional subjects common to art are many of which there is little or no lore, their decorative possibilities being the reason for their portrayal. Among these is "The Kingfisher and Iris," shown in the woodcut by Hiroshige. On this print, the artist wrote the following jocular inscription:

“The vain kingfisher is admiring himself in the mirror of the pool.” This bird is also combined, quite paradoxically, with the lotus, to indicate its repentance from the sin of killing other creatures for food.



From a painting by Gyokuden

“The Bullfinch and Morning-glory,” as shown in the colour print by Genki, and The Bullfinch and Bamboo Trees of the given painting by Kōtei, belong to this class. The latter is interesting because it happens to be one of twelve hundred and twenty-four designs which he painted in fourteen consecutive hours for guests attending a social function, thereby exemplifying the remarkable facility of Japanese painters.

There are still other subjects, including the quail combined with autumn plants and the moon, examples of which are given by the paintings of Bairei and Katei, in which the modern schools have allied seasonal birds and flowers for their aesthetic qualities irrespective of any legendary or symbolical significance.

THE TREES ARE FROZEN DEEP  
IN SNOWY GARB, AND NOW AND THEN,  
A BIRD CHIRPS IN ITS SLEEP.

AFTER THE WINTER SNOWS HAVE GONE, THE SONGS OF  
THE SPARROWS ARE HEARD AMONG THE FRAGRANT PLUM  
BLOSSOMS, AND THE SWAYING BAMBOO LEAVES.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### THE BAT AND THE BUTTERFLY

*Flying hats under the moonlight,  
Lacquered phantoms in the air!*

SHIMIZU.



From a painting by Chiura

THE bat, belonging to the order of *Chiroptera*, appears to be what the Chinese call *fei shu*, “flying rat.” It is the only mammal capable of true flight and this is its only means of locomotion. When at rest or hibernating, it hangs from some support by the feet, head downward, enwrapped by its ample wings. In size it ranges from the small red bat of North America, which measures about three inches across the spread wings, to the so-called “flying fox” of the Philippine Islands, which approximates a width of five feet.

There are said to be at least two thousand species of this order, some frugivorous, some insectivorous, while a few suck the blood of other mammals. It is from the latter, known as the Vampire Bat, that this dusky, nocturnal creature has derived its bad reputation. For who, in childhood, has not been told of its habit of sucking the blood of an unprotected sleeper, or getting its hooked claws entangled in his hair?

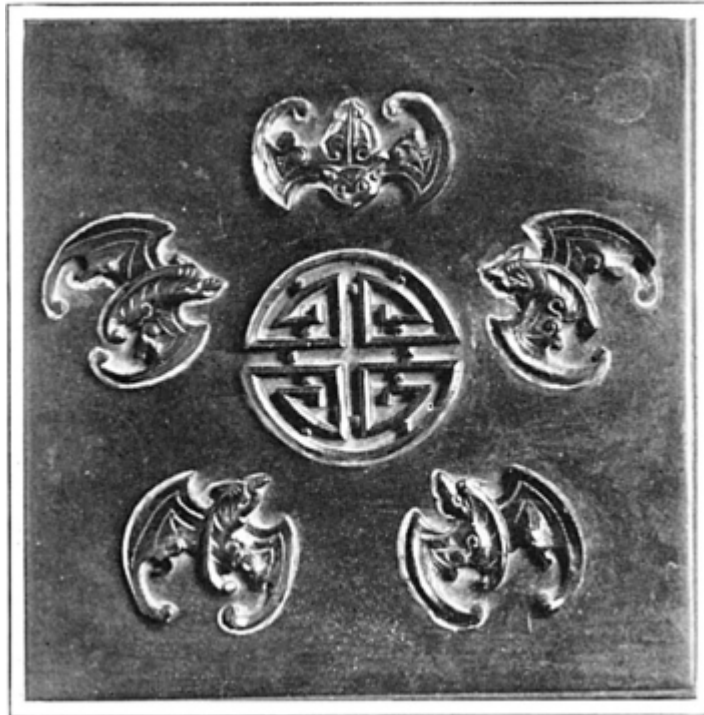
The aversion towards it so universally felt, however, may abate to some extent when, in the light of modern science, its true nature, as well as its worth, becomes known. Quite recently, surprising discoveries pertaining to it have been made by two men of eminence. First, Prof. Hamilton Hartridge of Cambridge University, U.S.A.—knowing of the remarkable ability of a bat to steer its course through the densest darkness, ever avoiding every obstacle—learned, through experiments, that there exists on the under surface of its wings innumerable small sound-producing centres which, acting automatically during flight, send out a high note that rebounds from all objects, no matter how tenuous, into the creature’s ears, thus enabling it to penetrate into the most remote parts of any cave.

The bat’s wings, therefore—it may be interesting to note—have led to the invention of a mechanical device which has proved most useful, not only in detecting submarines in war-time, but also in locating the presence of rocks or icebergs under the ocean surface and, therefore, preventing disasters occurring from such causes.

Then, again, through the experiments of Dr. Charles A. R. Campbell of San Antonio, Texas, it has been shown that the dreaded bat is capable of rendering still another service to the human family. This savant discovered that certain species of the order subsisted upon mosquitoes and, since his city and the surrounding country was sorely afflicted with malaria proven to be caused by these pests, he persuaded the authorities to import hundreds of bats, and to provide comfortable quarters for their

accommodation by erecting bat roosts. So successful have been the results of the experiments in converting this region into a healthy locality, that the people, realizing the value of Dr. Campbell's achievement to them as well as to all mankind, in their gratitude, passed resolutions recommending him as worthy of the Nobel prize.

The best-known legend relating to the bat, found in the fables of Æsop, and universally known, is "The Battle of the Birds and the Beasts." The import of this tale is that when the bat was invited by the birds to join them it replied, "I am a beast," and when similarly invited by the beasts it said, "I am a bird." Later, seeing the beasts were winning, it allied itself to them. Then, to its surprise, the birds rallied, and seeing its mistake it immediately went over to them. But its reception was not what it anticipated, for it was at once seized, and after being tried by a council of war for being a deserter, it was stripped, banished, and doomed to live in darkness for ever.



From a Chinese gift-box. The *Wu-fu* Emblem

In the Orient, especially in China, this nightly visitant was regarded in quite a different light. Among the many symbolic motives decorating wares, none is more in evidence than the bat, due to the significance bestowed upon it; for it is a most important factor in the expression of congratulations and accompanying good wishes for longevity and happiness. Every gift, therefore, which is sent upon any felicitous occasion, as the celebration of a birthday, or any other convivial gathering, is beautified by this very pleasing unit of design. Hence it is not surprising that it is found on every kind of object, varying from a bed to its hanging tassels; from a table to its wares, useful as well as ornamental; or from a mandarin coat to the things of jade made for personal adornment or objects of use.



From a Chinese carving for a key hanger. A Conventional Bat

Conspicuous among these articles is the gift-box, which, however, is not a part of the offering but merely the receptacle in which it is delivered. It is quite commonly found in curio shops in varying sizes made of different materials, including teak-wood, brass, leather, and papier-mâché, the latter being generally a brilliant red or some equally attractive colour.



From a Japanese woodcut. *Jitsu-getsu*

The selection of the bat to symbolize happiness and longevity was not determined—as must be quite apparent—by the natural characteristics of the little marauder. Like all Taoist emblems which, through the representation of some concrete form, express an abstract idea, it was derived from a homophone. Hence, notwithstanding that the characters for “bat” and “happiness” are quite different, they both are pronounced *fu*, for which reason the bat, quite consistently, becomes the symbol of happiness. And since longevity is regarded by the Chinese as an essential of happiness, the bat, likewise believed to live to a great age, has been given this additional significance. It is, therefore, used in combination with other longevity symbols such as the *shou*, the *t’ao*, and the *ivani szu*.





From a Japanese towel. Bats, Moon and Longevity Character

The *shou*, a very beautiful ideograph, sometimes rectangular but more frequently circular, has many variations as may be seen in THE MAP OF THE HUNDRED *SHOU*, some of which are shown by several of the accompanying illustrations; but whatever its design, it always means “old age” or “years of a long and prosperous life.”

The *t'ao*, also called *pao t'ao*, “fabulous peach,” is said to bestow upon those who eat it three thousand additional years of existence. For this fruit—which is held to grow on the legendary longevity tree, the *fan t'ao*, upon Mount Kw'ên Lun, the Taoist Paradise of the Immortals—takes an equal number of years for blooming, maturing, and ripening. In combination with the bat, it is referred to as *hsiang t'ao lisiang fu*, “a twofold perpetuation of longevity and happiness,” and is found, quite commonly, on objects used at marriages as well as on gifts then bestowed.



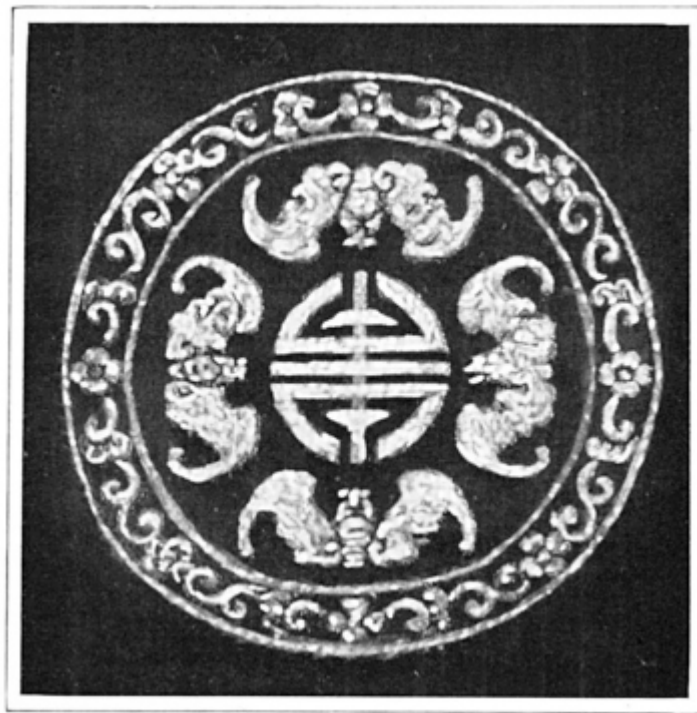
From a Chinese gift-box lid. A Bat and cloud Motive

The *wan szǔ*, “*swastika*”—popularly known to the Occident as a symbol significant of “the heart of Buddha” or his great and abiding love, and worshipped by the Lotus School—was used as a longevity symbol by the Taoists long before the introduction of Buddhism into China. It was an ancient emblem of the *Shang* or *Shang-ti*, the Creating God-idea, which possessed the power of counteracting evil. Its chief significance appears to have been astronomical, as it is a matter of record that, at the time of the Emperor Wu, twelfth century B.C., the *wan szǔ* in a circle represented the sun; a half *wan szǔ* in a circle, the moon; and a vacant circle, a star. The Lamas of a later time regarded it as of good augury, but mainly considered it as typifying “the continuous moving” or “the ceaseless becoming” which is commonly called Life. Again, it is believed by some authorities to have been originally an emblem of the revolution of the sun about the earth; and by others, a quadrupled image of the Big Dipper in the constellation of Ursa Major which, in its annual rotation around Polaris through the four seasons, quite easily may have suggested to the ancients this wheeling cross.



From a Chinese brocade. A Blessing Symbol

The Chinese, however, claim that it is a rebus derived from an old character, *shih*, meaning “ten,” and “abundance,” which later, acquiring additional strokes, extended its significance to such further abundance as “ten thousand” or a “myriad.” In this sense, Hokusai, the famous Japanese designer of colour prints, used it for his seal after he had completed his ten thousand drawings.



From a Chinese porcelain disc. The *Pa-kwa*

The *wan szǔ wen*, “swastika pattern,” in which the motive is interwoven into an all-over design, is constantly used either by itself or as a background for the other longevity and blessing motives before

referred to.

The bat is also associated with the cloud motive, as shown in the given illustrations of an extraordinarily beautiful composition on a carved gift-box lid, and of a Chinese rug. This combination is quite common, and is intended to mean “May your longevity and happiness be as great as heaven is high.” Again, it appears with coins, being portrayed holding two of them interlocked in its claws, meaning to express the desire, “May you have the happiness derived from riches.” It is also, quite consistently, an attribute of Shou Lao, the god of longevity, and of several of the Taoist Immortals, as shown in two accompanying illustrations; and, frequently, of Chung Ku’ei, the demon-queller, familiar to the Japanese as Shōki.

But probably the most popular application of the bat motive occurs in the design known as the *Wu-fu*, “Five bats” arranged around the *shou*, as shown in another illustration of a carved lid of a gift box. This emblem—significant of the five blessings: virtue, riches, offspring, long life, and a happy death—not only was used to decorate objects but, made in stucco or painted on red paper, was placed above the doors of residences in order to attract these benefits.



From a Chinese painting A Sage Studying the *Wu-fu* Emblem

Some designs of the *Wu-fu* have the *T'ai Chi* as a centre spot instead of the *shou* as shown in the accompanying illustration of a Chinese painting. This symbol which holds within its circular enclosure the enfolded *Yang* and *Yin*, the emblems of opposites such as good and evil, light and darkness, is regarded as the embodiment of the masculine-feminine principle in the development of the mundane *egg*. As in the accompanying illustration of a porcelain disc, surrounded by the Eight

Trigrams, it occupies the centre of the *Pa-kwa*, the most profound of all symbols devised by this ancient intellectual nation.



From a Chinese rug. Bat, Cloud and Longevity Symbols

The *T'ai Chi* is rarely used by the Japanese, although the principle of *In-yō*, which is their counterpart of the *Yin* and *Yang*, dominates almost every activity of life and every expression of art. Occasionally it appears as in the beautiful and impressive design printed on an ordinary cotton towel, as herewith shown. In this composition, the *T'ai Chi* units spot the dark mass of the partially represented bat at the lower part of the design, while above, in the white disc representing the moon, is delineated a character reading *fukurokuju*, meaning "happiness, emolument, and longevity." The design, as a whole, denotes what is known as *meian*, or the law of contrast as manifested by the combination of white and black, the white being portrayed by the moon and the black by the bat, with the assumption that the combination had its origin in the *T'ai Chi*.



From a Chinese painting. Shou Lao, the God of Longevity

In the illustration adjoining that of the porcelain disc, the *T'ai Chi* is shown as significant of the two contrasting luminaries, the one on the right portraying the sun with its associated *Yo* or *Yang* symbol—the crane; and the other, on the left, the moon with its two *In* or *Yin* symbols—the stag and the bat, all significant of longevity.





From a woven Manchu hat streamer. Bat and *Swastika* Pattern

In Japan, however, the bat, known as *kōmori*, has never been accepted as a symbol of happiness, for, as in the Occident, it has always been shunned and avoided. Even the Buddhist priests, who ever find some lesson for mankind in every form of life, have selected it as the emblem of a darkened understanding, to be used in the interpretation of *Mumyō*, or *Mumyō no yami*, “The darkness where there is no light.”

Hence, since the bat sleeps during the daytime and comes forth at night, and to all appearances flutters about in a senseless fashion, it is believed to typify the unsettled and chaotic state of the unhappy, restless human consciousness.

As a subject for painters the bat is quite picturesque, particularly when represented flying against the moon or under willow branches, and, not infrequently, the figure of a woman is added, possibly on account of her association with the willow.

When the foreign umbrella was first introduced into Japan, during the Meiji era, its resemblance to bat wings was at once recognized, and it was called the *kōmori gasa*, “bat umbrella.”

Sharing the honours with the bat in the field of oriental art, the butterfly is conspicuous. Its name is derived from a yellow variety, on account of its resemblance to butter, implying a Teutonic origin. It belongs to the order of *Lepidoptera*, the scale wing insect, because its wings are covered with minute, overlapping, and generally very brilliantly coloured, feathery scales. Including the moths of the order, no less than fifty thousand species are described. The great range of colours and markings found on

the different varieties is due to what is technically termed protective coloration, nature's device for concealing them from prevailing enemies.



From an embroidered Manchu hat streamer. A Butterfly Pattern

In China this magnificent insect, known as *hit tieh*, like the bat, serves as a most graceful and beautiful motive for decorating wares both useful and ornamental. Then in Japan, where it is known as *chō*, but frequently spoken of in the plural as *chō chō*, it not only perpetuates many of the traditions relating to it in the Hermit Kingdom but, by acquiring others, has enlarged its scope as a theme for poetry and painting.



From a Chinese painting. The Immortal Lan Ts'ai-hou

In the two countries its principal association is with woman, meaning, however, the maid and not the matron. This is possibly due to the similarity of their respective qualities, for both are reputed to be fair and fickle, frail and frivolous, light-hearted, and given to dreaming. It is, therefore, not surprising that the youth, beauty, and charm of the one should be likened to that of the other, nor that their respective weaknesses should be compared. To speak of the colourful attire of a girl as resembling the wings of the butterfly, or of her disposition to change lovers as paralleling the creature's flitting from flower to flower in search of honey, is quite the custom. For this reason the *geisha* is always referred to as a butterfly, as is the vain woman who spends her time in dress and self-adornment. Women quite frequently are named *chō*, "butterfly," or *ko-chō*, "little butterfly"; and not only are their hair ornaments shaped like this winged creature, but their *obi* are tied to simulate it.



From a Chinese rug. Butterfly, Flower and Lion Design

Two large paper butterflies figure prominently at the marriage ceremony in the *Sansan-hido*, “the three-times -three taking of wine” by both the bride and groom. They are known as the *o-chō*, “masculine,” and the *me-chō*, “feminine,” and are significant of a happy union. This custom would indicate that the meaning attached to a pair of butterflies came from China, for there they were used as a symbol of conjugal felicity.

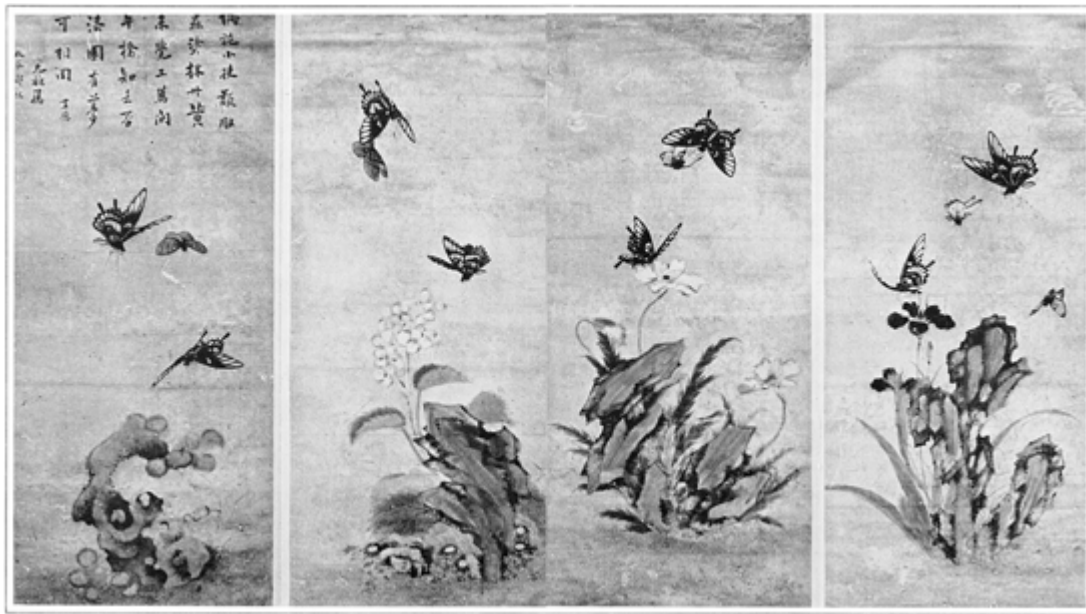
The butterfly, however, has not escaped the singular superstitions which primitive races held regarding most creatures. One, in particular, which held that man had the power of depositing his soul in animals for safety, believing that so long as it remained there it was invulnerable to the claims of death, has been perpetuated in the belief that a white butterfly may be the soul of a living person wandering about. Hence, should one enter a house, it must not be molested, but treated kindly, for it may be a friend or some loved one come to announce his own death, since this is thought to be the habit of a soul about to pass on to the next world, an idea expressed in the poem:

On the pink flower there is a white butterfly, whose spirit I wonder?



From a Japanese painting by Tanyū. Butterflies and Peonies

A most beautiful legend appertaining to this belief is known by the title "The White Butterfly." It is that of an old man lying at the point of death, when suddenly a white butterfly fluttered into the room and lit upon his pillow. Fearing that it might disturb the sleeper, an attendant drove it out, but it insisted upon coming in again until the door was barred against it. Then, seeing the futility of its efforts, it flew direct to a near-by cemetery, lingered for a short time over a woman's tomb and then mysteriously disappeared. The attendant, pursuing it, observed that upon the stone was inscribed a woman's name. Later he heard not only that this was the name of the old man's sweetheart of his youth, who had died just before the day set for the wedding, but that the aged lover had, through the intervening years, remained faithful to her memory, daily visiting her grave and praying for the repose of her soul. The legend then concludes that, since the old man could no longer go to her, she, in the form of a white butterfly, came to him.



From Chinese paintings. Butterflies and Flowers Representing the Four Seasons.

Quite frequently the butterfly has been regarded as a symbol of the immortal soul on account of its metamorphosis from a caterpillar. Doubtless the ancients saw in the dual manifestation of this creature the counterparts of the characteristics of spiritual and material life, as well as a lesson of the reward of heaven for a life of good deeds, as exemplified by the butterfly's life of freedom and joy after faithfully performing its duties as a grub.



From a Japanese woodcut. The Butterfly Dance



Again, the Taoists of China appear to be responsible for many queer legends concerning it. One pertains to the philosopher Hsiao-shih, who dreamed that he was a butterfly, and so real was the experience that, upon waking, he could not tell whether he was a man who had dreamed he was a butterfly, or a butterfly dreaming it was a man.



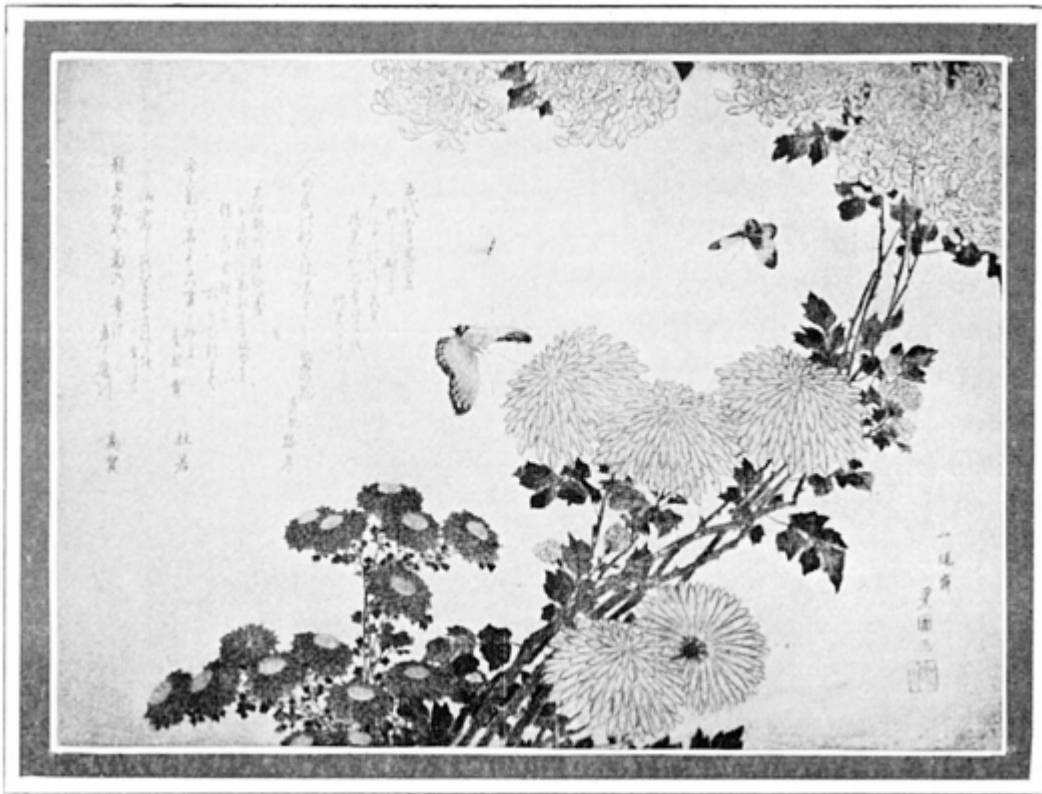
From a Chinese painting. Butterflies and Flowers

It likewise is said to have had a dark and ominous significance, for some people regarded it as the transformation of a witch. At times it has inspired fear, particularly when it came in great numbers, such as when Taira no Masakado was secretly preparing for his revolt. Then great swarms of butterflies appeared in Kyoto and frightened the people, for they regarded them as foreboding some disaster.

But whatever detrimental to its reputation may have been said of the butterfly, its qualities, which ever suggest eternal youth, mirth, and happiness on the one hand, and quiet and peace on the other, have been for centuries a source of inspiration to poets. An example of this is given in the following well-known *hokku*:

Would that I might always have the desire to chase butterflies,

significant of “May I ever be childlike and find pleasure in the simple and beautiful things of life.”



From a Japanese colour-print by Toyokuni. Butterflies and Chrysanthemums

Yet this chasing of butterflies may also be given quite the opposite meaning—that of indulging in an impractical venture. This is illustrated in Hokusai's *MANGWA* by a drawing entitled *Kiyo ja choin tawa murer eru*, "The bewildered woman chasing butterflies," the real significance of which is, however, "Yōka, the goddess of folly, chasing the butterfly souls of men."

The erratic flitting and fluttering of the creature, which has been designated as dancing, is doubtless responsible for the *Kochō no Mai*, "Butterfly Dance," as well as for the following poem:

The world indeed seems peaceful as the butterflies dance through the spring breeze.

The butterfly dance—which also appears to have been used by the ancient Mexicans and South Americans, as well as by the Asiatics—is shown in an accompanying illustration of Japanese dancers in action; while in another, a dancer's costume—consisting of a skirt, a huge butterfly to be attached to the shoulders, and a crown surmounted by a phoenix—constitutes the beautiful composition of the *surimono*.

Again, an opposite trait of the butterfly—the utter stillness with which it rests on a flower—has led to the idea of its dreaming, as here expressed:

It has no voice, the butterfly, whose dream of flowers I fain would hear.



From a Japanese *surimono*. A Butterfly Dance Costume

This inability to make a sound—so unlike most insects that frequently are caged for their songs—is not, according to the following poem, regarded as a limitation, but as a blessing in disguise:

Did it but sing, the butterfly  
A captive sad might be!

In China, the painter has ever combined the butterfly with flowers, in fact it is referred to as “the stemless flower.” It is most frequently found with the peony and the latter’s associates, the cock, the peacock, and the mythical lion, but it also occurs with other flowers, such as the morning-glory, the chrysanthemum, and the plum blossom. In the latter case it is intended to express the rebus *mei tieh*, “even in old age as beautiful as a butterfly.” In a given illustration, it is shown with flowers in a set of paintings representing the “Four Seasons,” a common custom in the treatment of all subjects. Here, spring is portrayed on the one at the right by the iris; then, successively, summer, by the poppy; autumn, by the aster; and winter, by the snowflower. On the latter is inscribed the poem:

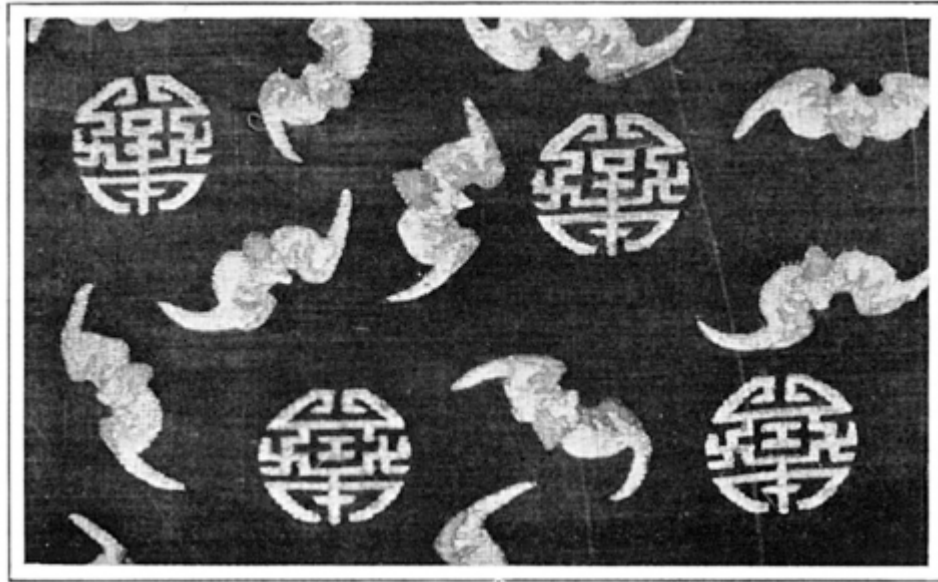
As the seasons change,  
The butterflies and flowers  
Combine in new brocades  
Which lure to dreams.

In Japan, while the butterfly appears in painting, it generally is subordinated to the flowers in the composition, as shown in the given illustrations by Tanyū and Toyokuni. It is, however, conspicuous as a motive for the *mon*, “crest,” of the nobility, and was used by each of the two great clans of médiéval times, the Genji and the Heike, the former consisting of a top view of the insect, and the latter of a side view.

In conclusion, a review of the disparity existing between the distinguishing qualities of the two winged creatures treated in this article offers an interesting theme for reflection. The hapless bat—

issuing from the darkness, feeding upon smaller and weaker creatures, and arousing feelings of distrust and dread—contrasts strikingly with the favoured butterfly, which, living in the sunlight and subsisting upon the sweetness of flowers, enkindles emotions of delight and joy.

Here again, from two lower forms of life, may be drawn another lesson for the attainment of the “Great Becoming” of humanity.



From a Chinese silk and gold brocade. Bat and Longevity Symbols

#### THE BAT REDEEMED

THE BAT RETIRES TO SOME LONE CELL,  
WHERE WORLDLY NOISE CAN NE’ER INTRUDE,  
WHERE HE IN SHADE MAY CALMLY DWELL,  
AND SPEND THE-DAY IN SOLITUDE.  
MODEST AND PEACEFUL, WELL HE KNOWS  
HOW FRAIL IS MAN, HOW FALSE HIS WAYS;  
AND TURNS HIM FROM DAY’S EMPTY SHOWS,  
AND FROM THE SUN’S INTEMPERATE BLAZE.  
HE IS ENAMoured OF THE NIGHT,  
AND WHILE NO RIVAL COMES BETWEEN,  
THE STARS CAN YIELD HIM AMPLE LIGHT,  
WHEN HE MAY WATCH AND GAZE UNSEEN;  
THEN HE RETIRES TO MUSE ONCE MORE,  
ON ALL HER BEAUTY’S WONDROUS STORE;  
AND FEELS FAIR NIGHT HAS CHARMS FOR HIM  
TO WHICH DAY’S GARISH RAYS ARE DIM.

—THE ROSE GARDEN OF PERSIA.

## CHAPTER XXXV

### THE DRAGON-FLY AND OTHER INSECTS

*While the Dragon-fly is wandering about  
The breeze is trying to go out.*

WANG CH'ÊN-LING, *Ming dynasty*.



From a painting by Chiura

AMONG all of nature's creatures, none offer more interest to a student than those of the insect world. Although collectively regarded as the lowest forms of sentience, their every activity reveals an intelligence comparable to any tribe of animals in the ascending scale of life.

Their wonderful little bodies with myriads of eyes and ears scattered all over their parts and voices coming from everywhere but their throats; the birth and maturity of many varieties through the different stages of metamorphosis; their remarkable social organizations and powers of construction; the part they play in the economy of nature by destroying baneful decaying vegetation; and their contribution to human happiness through their musical proclivities and superb beauty have, for centuries, supplied matter to entomologists for numberless volumes.

Of all of the winged tribe, excepting the butterfly, the dragon-fly is the most graceful and lovely. Its familiar form, glistening in blue iridescence like spun mother-of-pearl shell against the dark of forests or the light of marsh or moor, has ever been a delight to youth and adult and the inspiration of poets and painters.

In Japan, where it is called *tombō*, it is the chief of all insects, principally because it is one of the empire's emblems. Its selection for this high honour is attributed to an ancient tradition pertaining to Jimmu Tennō, the nation's first emperor, who, from the top of a high mountain, saw a resemblance of the configuration of the land to that of a dragon-fly licking its tail.

From that remote period, Japan has been in the habit of referring to itself as Akitsushima, "Dragonfly Island." It is, however, quite likely that this name may have been derived from the prevalence of the insect, for there probably is no other country in the temperate zone that has so great a variety of dragon-flies. At least thirty-two kinds have been classified, each being known by a separate name, and varying in characteristics and beauty from the others. They range from the familiar blues, through greens, yellows, oranges, reds, to purples and blacks, and in many instances their wings are spotted with beautiful patterns. The names bestowed upon them are quite significant of their

individual peculiarities, such as the *karakasa tombō*, “umbrella dragonfly,” the *chō tombō*, “butterfly dragon-fly,” the *ka tombō*, “mosquito dragon-fly.” Others again, on account of the creature’s elfish head, globular eyes, protruding mouth, and generally weird expression, are reminders of early superstitions, such as the *oni yamma*, “demon dragon-fly,” the *ki yamma*, “goblin dragon-fly,” the *yurei tomba*, “ghost dragon-fly,” and the *shōryō tombō*, “dragon-fly of the dead.” The latter is the most distinguished, since it is believed to be the winged steed that carries the *Hotohe Sama*, “August Spirits of the Ancestors,” on their annual return to their families during the *Bon* Festival—Japan’s All-Souls Day occurring in the autumn.

This insect is likewise regarded in quite another light, for its constant flitting about has given the impression that it is aimless and playful, irresponsible and unreliable, of which qualities it has become symbolic. For this reason during the Genroku era, late seventeenth century, when the gaiety and merry spirit of the times seemed to affect all classes, it was not uncommon to refer to an individual having the tendency to be free and easy and uninclined to attend to duty, as a *tombō*.



From a colour-print by Fusui. Dragon-fly and Water Plants

But had the real nature of the creature been known it would not have been thus maligned. The fact is that, being predacious and insectivorous, it is ever in search of food; hence, its swift manoeuvres and sudden changes of flight are but a part of its necessary activities. Then again, remembering that its particular quest is for the dreaded mosquito upon which it mainly feeds, and that its entire time is



spent in the extermination of this pest, not only should it be looked upon as a model for emulation, but be recognized as a real benefactor.



From a colour-print by Umpō. Dragon-fly and Iris

The poets and painters, though, have not been unmindful of its beauty and worth, since for centuries they have striven to immortalize it. The oldest known verse was written over seven centuries ago by the Emperor Yūryaku, in gratitude to a dragonfly that had pounced upon and devoured a gadfly which had stung his arm. It appears that he had requested his ministers to write an ode in praise of the insect and, as they hesitated, he himself wrote the following:

Even a creeping insect  
Waits upon the Great Lord.  
Thy form it will bear,  
O Yamato, land of the dragon-fly!



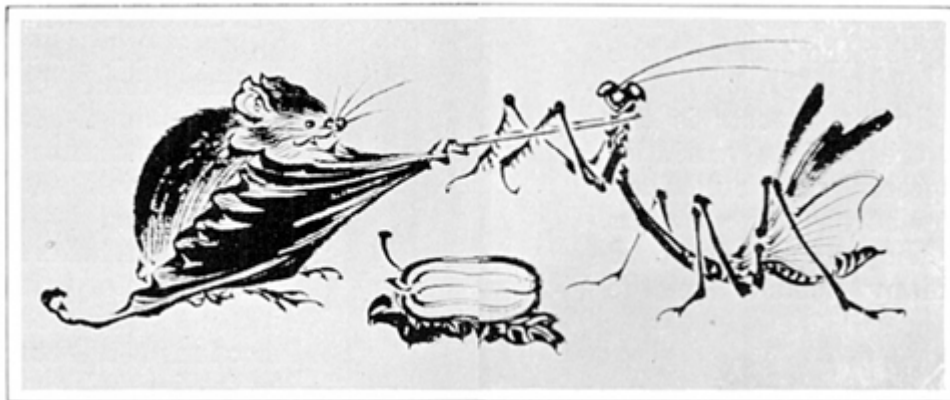
From a painting by Kyōsai. An Insect Cortège

The most celebrated poem on the insect is the *hokku*—

How far, I wonder, did he stray,  
Chasing the burnished dragon-fly to-day?

written by the poetess Kaga no Chiyo, after the death of her little boy. The child, according to the custom of Japanese children, habitually spent some of his daily playtime in hunting the *tomba*, hence, after her loss, the bereaved mother never saw the dazzling creature without thinking of her loved one and believing that his spirit still pursued it.

Another predacious insect, quite distinguished in the oriental decorative arts, is the “praying mantis,” so called from its habit, when still, of extending its forelegs above its head as if in prayer. While it is thus known in many parts of the world, its name should be written “preying mantis,” for in reality the attitude it assumes is one of lying in ambush for a quarry.



From a painting by Kyosai. A Test of strength

As a hunter the mantis is extraordinarily clever. Being equipped with the power of disguising itself through protective resemblances by camouflaging twigs and leaves of bushes and trees, it will remain motionless for hours until the approach of a chance victim. Then, stealing forward slowly with its evil eyes glaring from a demoniacal visage and its wings and sabre-like forelegs waving fiendishly to terrorize the poor creature into submission, it will, with a single blow, cut it in two and at once devour it.



From a painting by Shōga. Insects and Autumn Leaves

As is the case at times, “the female is the deadlier of the species.” She is larger than the male and possesses more powerful forelegs. With this advantage, it is not surprising that she should quarrel with her lord, an occurrence that is not uncommon, and sometimes she not only kills him but also eats him; for nature has given this species of insect an insatiable appetite. An example of its voracity was seen when one, under observation, actually ate in succession three grasshoppers—each seven-eighths of an inch long—one daddy longlegs, and then tackled another mantis which he would also probably have consumed had he not been checked in his onslaught.

The mantis is a large insect, sometimes attaining the size of three inches. It is beautifully green, a colour the female ever retains, but which in the male turns grey or brown in maturity. It appears to be unknown in America, but is familiar to many parts of Europe, where, in some countries, it is called a camel cricket, and in others a rear-horse, from its rearing posture when stalking its food.

It has always made a strong appeal to the superstitious, and there are many legends pertaining to it. A typical one relates to St. Francis Xavier who, seeing one approach, was so impressed by its prayerful demeanour that he ordered it to sing aloud, whereupon it immediately chanted a canticle.

The Greeks dubbed it a foreteller. Anacreon accredited it with heralding the approach of spring, while Theocritus asserted that it foreboded famine and disaster. In Mohammedan countries, on account of its simulating prayer, it was so revered that it was a crime to kill one.



From a colour-print by Hokusai. Cricket and Cucumber Vine

In China it is known both as the *t'ien ma*, “heavenly horse,” and the *sha ch'ung*, “insect killer,” and was esteemed a courageous warrior on account of its bravery and tactics, qualities which are described in a number of legends. One familiar to students of oriental lore is of ancient date. It relates that Duke Chuang of Ts'ai of the T'ang dynasty, while on the way to a hunt, noticed a mantis with uplifted arms trying to stop his chariot. “Ah! What is this?” he inquired, to which an attendant replied, “A mantis, an insect which knows how to advance, but not to retreat. Without even measuring its strength, it ever offers resistance.” The duke then said, “Truly, if it were a man it would be a champion hero of the Empire.” Thereupon he ordered his charioteer to dodge it, which act won him the loyalty of all warriors. It is this legend which, although of Taoist origin, was appropriated by the Buddhists for their proverb,

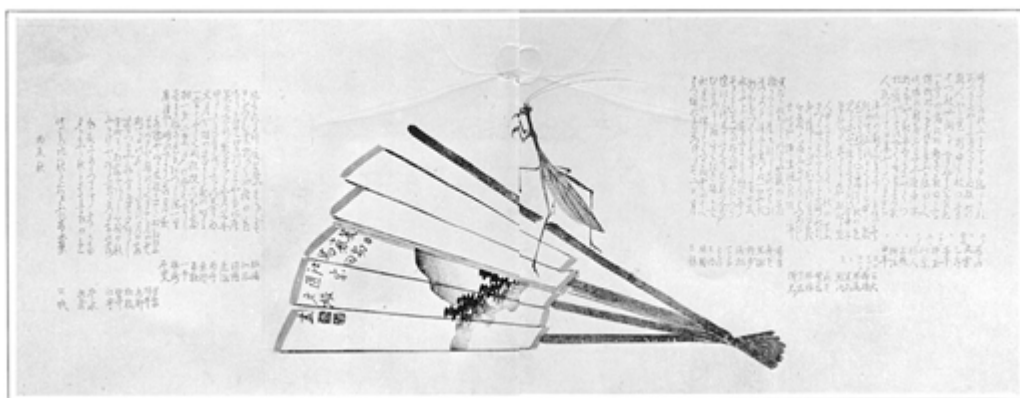
Even the sharp mandibles of the fighting mantis are set at naught by the wheel of fate.

The Japanese, to whom the mantis is known as the *tōrō*, fully appreciate the picturesque possibilities of this insect, as shown in five accompanying illustrations. Especially in the one, “Serenading the Moon,” the long lines of its antennae, neck, body, and legs have been composed with the other elements of the design into a very beautiful pattern. It also shows to advantage in the painting by Kyōsai in “A Test of Strength” where, with a melon for a prize, it is engaged with a bat in a sport known as *kubibiki*, “neck-pulling contest.” Again, in combination with its usual victim, the cicada, a huge harvest fly, called *semi*, it is a popular motive in the arts of both China and Japan,

exceptional designs of which may be found in carvings of jade and other valuable stones, and in lacquer.



From a woodcut by Hokusai. Mantis and Melon Vino



From a *surimono* Two Things of Summer

While all insects in different degrees are cherished, the particular group known as Insect Musicians occupies a very important place in Japanese life. It includes the cicadas, crickets, locusts, grasshoppers, and beetles. In lore and literature they are referred to as songsters, but in reality they are instrumentalists—veritable drummers and fiddlers—for they produce their sounds through the oscillation of some of their members or the friction of others. In any event, if they possess vocal chords, they are not located in their throats but on the surface of their bodies. Their processes of stridulation vary with the different species. For example, the prolonged shrill articulations of the cicadse are caused by vibrating the membrane of a drum-like sound organ under the abdomen, while the merry chirrup of the cricket and the gentle call of the katydid are produced by rubbing the sawlike edges of one pair of wings over the rough surfaces of the file-like structures placed at the base of the other pair; and the crackling, snapping, sounds of the different varieties of locusts and grasshoppers, by scraping their forewings with the femurs of their hindlegs, or by the edges of the latter as they fly.

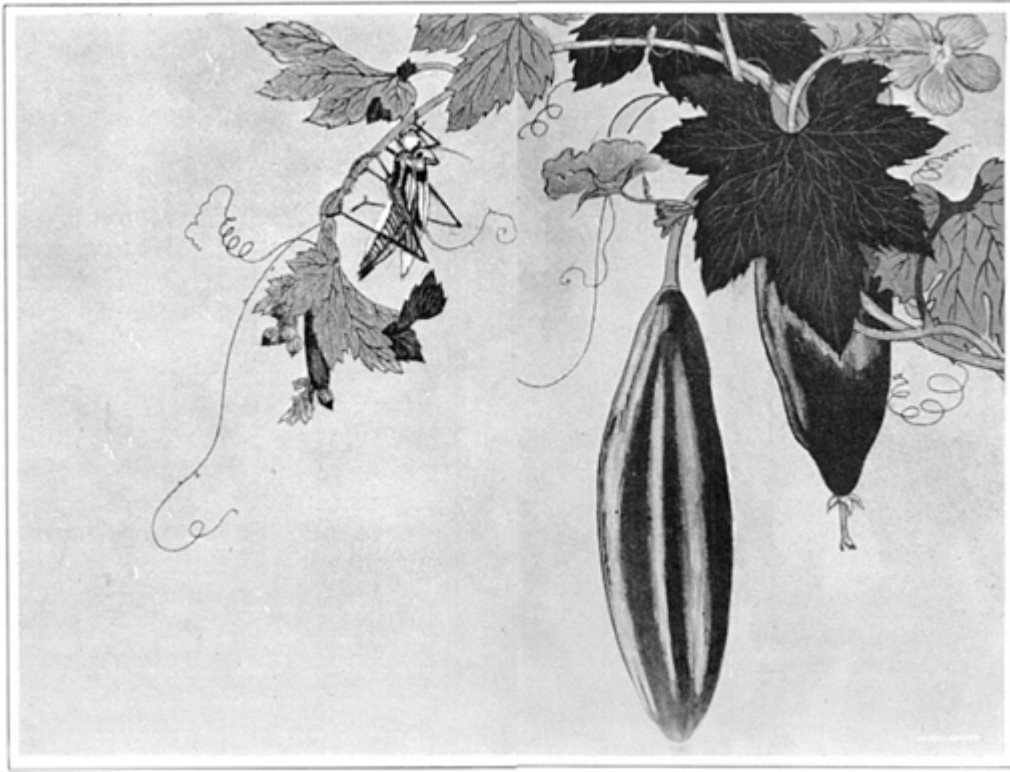


From a painting by Kwazan. Cockscomb and Insects

The most conspicuous of these sound-producing insects is the cicada, before referred to. While there are a few varieties of this species which may be termed songsters, as a rule they are very noisy and, since their crying occurs at the time of the greatest heat of the summer, it accentuates the suffering imposed by the temperature, a fact voiced in many poems like the following:



The chirrup of the *semi* aggravates the heat until I wish to cut down the pine tree on which it sings.



From a painting by Utamaro. Cricket and Pumpkin Vine

When the *semi* cease their storm,  
O how refreshing the stillness,  
Gratefully, then, resounds the musical speech of the pines.

Among the kinds of insects noted for their musical stridulation, the *tsuku-tsuku-bōshi*, the *aburazemi*, and the *higu-rashi* are the most important.



From a woodcut by Shugetsu. Cricket and Bean Vine

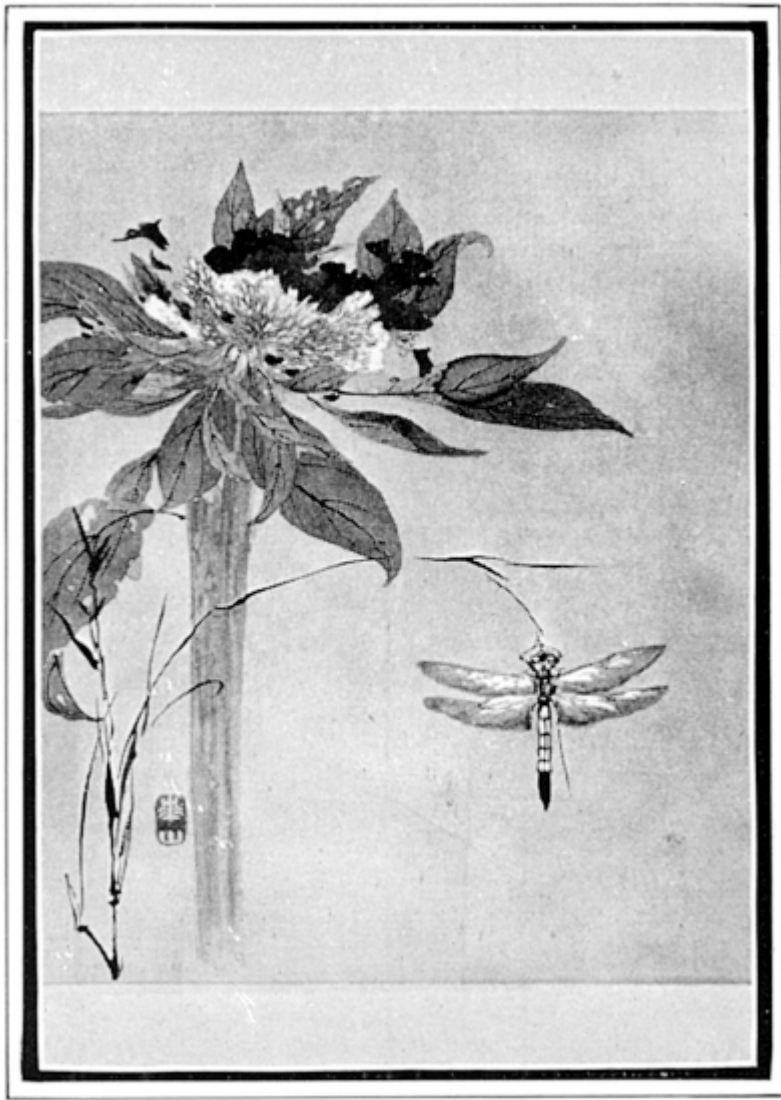
The voice of the *tsuku-tsuku-bōshi* is frequently compared to that of a bird. It acquired its name from a legend pertaining to an old man who died away from his home in Tsukushi, and his ghost took the form of this variety of *semi* and ever cries *Tsukashi koishi I Tsukushi koishi!* “I long for Tsukushi, I want to see Tsukushi!”

The voice of the *aburazemi* must likewise give much pleasure, judging from the beautiful *hokku*—

What a voice! Has the clew taken life? Oh! the *aburazemi*!

While this songster begins at sunrise, when the tree leaves sparkle with dew, the *higurashi* melodizes mainly at dusk in a sweet tone that accords with the twilight hour. Its call rings out, *kana-kana, kana-kana*, sounding like a hand-bell rung quickly. The interpretation of its name is “day darkening,” hence some poets affect to believe that its crying hastens the coming of darkness, as—

*O higurashi!* Even if you cease your singing, clay darkens fast enough!



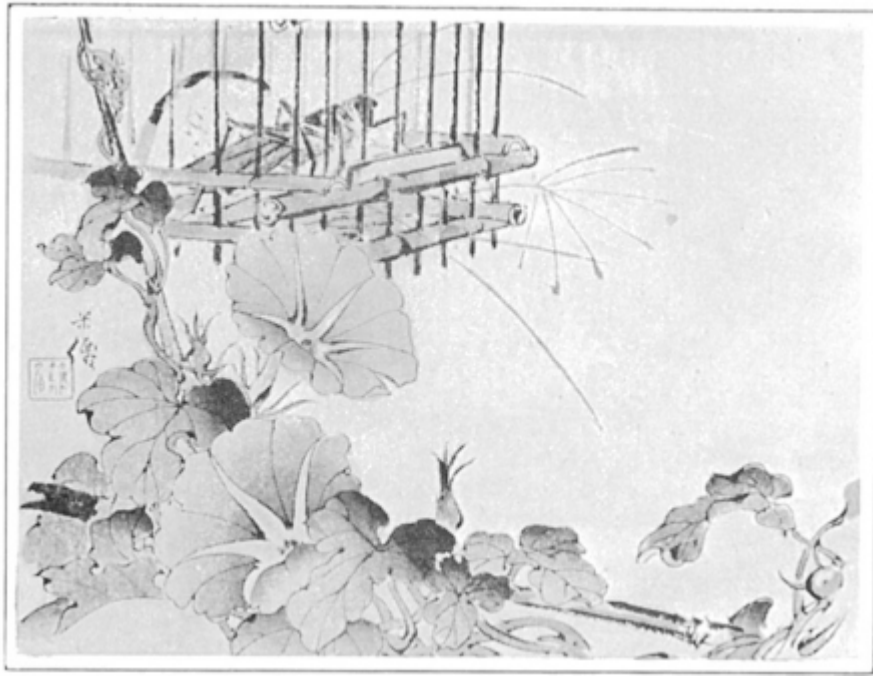
From a painting by Motonobu. Cockscomb and Dragon-fly

But the Japanese regard more highly the night singers, among which are crickets and beetles, and while their number is large, a few, such as the following, have been celebrated by the poets.

The *suzumushi*, reputed to be the most sweetly singing of the insect tribe, is mentioned in the GEJSTGI MONOGATARI, written A.D. 990, as follows:

Fain would I weep the whole night long,  
As weeps the *suzumushi*'s song  
And chants a melancholy lay  
Till night and darkness pass away.

The name *suzumushi* signifies "bell insect," but the bell referred to is the small one held in a bunch by Shinto priestesses in the sacred dance. It frequently occurs in this connection, as in the following poem:



From a painting by Beisen. Caged Cricket and Morning-glory Vine

The tinkle of tiny bells,—voices of the *suzumushi*,  
I hear in the autumn dark,  
And think of the fields at home.

The *matsumushi*, “pine insect,” also has notes which, in clearness and sweetness, are compared to a bell, but, in this instance, it is with an electric bell heard at a distance. It is also spoken of as the “waiting insect” because *matsu* may be written by two different characters, one signifying “pine” and the other “to wait”; hence the poem:

With dusk begins to cry  
The male of the waiting insect;  
I, too, await my beloved,  
And, hearing, my longing grows.



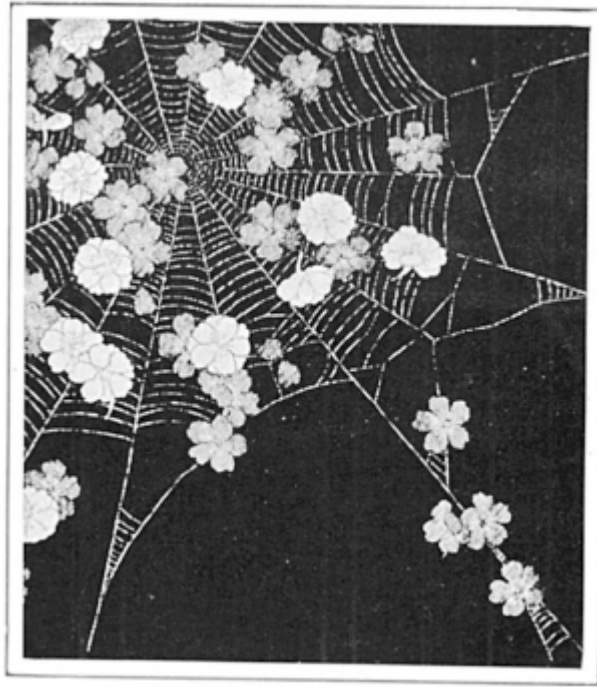
From a colour triptych by Kuniyoshi. Raikō under the Spell of the Demon Spider

A pair of grass larks that likewise gladden the hours of darkness are the *hataori-mushi*, “weaving insect,” and the *kirigirisu*, “sewing insect.” They derived their names from a typical bit of folk-lore designed to convey the double lesson of filial piety and industry. This relates to two young women, faithful and obedient, who for many years supported a blind old father by weaving and sewing, and when the old man died, the daughters mourned so deeply that in a very short time they too passed away. Immediately after their burial, strange sounds were heard above their graves which proved to come from two strange insects. One cried *Ji-i-i, chou-chou, Ji-i-i, chou-chou*, imitating the sound of a loom weaving, and the other, *Tsuzuri sasa-sasa, tsuzuri sasa-sasa*, suggestive of the sounds of Japanese words meaning, “Torn clothes, patch up, patch up; torn clothes, patch up, patch up.”



From a painting. Serenading the Moon

Another member of the insect world that is a source of much delight is the small black beetle, the firefly, or *hotaru* of the Japanese. This remarkable little creature, which has the power of generating a phosphorescent light, has been a mystery and a wonder in many parts of the world. Modern scientists, in particular, have given much thought to its ability to flash a pure cold light with so small an expenditure of energy; and vainly have they sought the insect's secret, realizing that it might prove to become an economic boon to civilization.



From a lacquer box lid. Captive Blossoms

Prior to the invention of artificial lights, fireflies served for purposes of illumination in many parts of the world. In China, where lamps were either unknown or prohibitive on account of expense, these insects were used for night study. The same is true of the Japanese, for, while the common folk retired at sunset and rose at sunrise, the student, being obliged to work after hours, pressed the little glow-fly into his service. Reference to this kind of light is expressed on an invitation to a graduation as follows: "I come through the *hotaru* light," significant of "working under serious deprivation."



From a painting by Shōbu. Insects and Autumn Leaves



The Japanese speak of two different kinds of fireflies as the *Genji hotaru* and the *Heihe hotaru*, recalling the two great factions which participated in the *Gempei* war in the twelfth century. These fireflies are believed to be the ghosts of the departed warriors who annually return to Uji, a small town about nine miles from Kyoto, where, in the *Hotaru Kassen*, “Firefly Battle,” they re-enact that celebrated conflict.



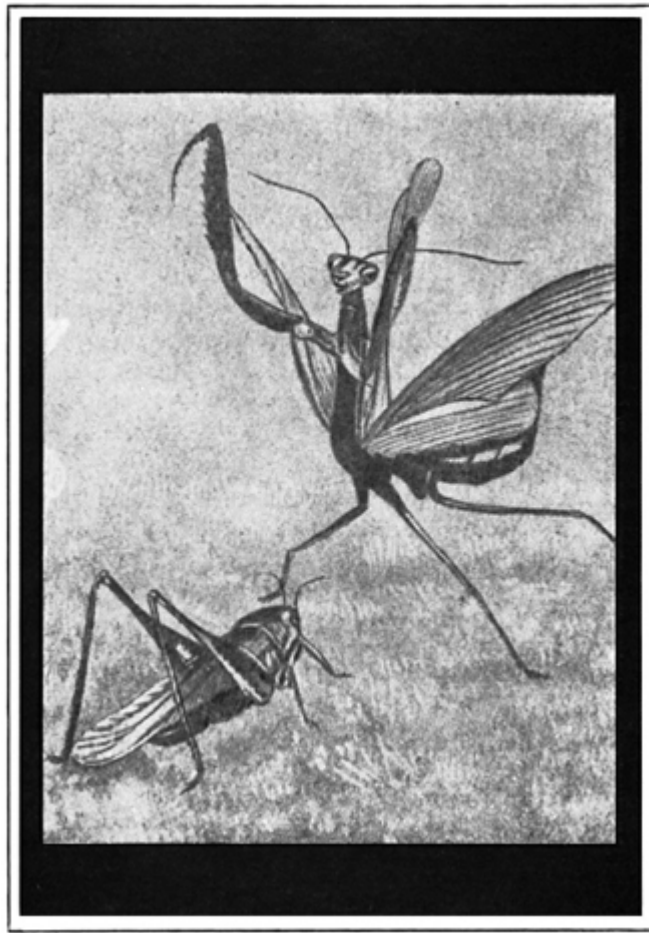
From a painting by Kōsho. Lighting the Moor

The event occurs in the late spring and is attended by thousands of people, who come from every direction to see this all-night performance of the sparkling insects. The splendour of the spectacle is produced by myriads of fireflies. They come from the hills adjoining the Ujigawa and, after darting hither and thither in a wild manner, swarm and cling to each other in one mass above the water. Then, after what may be thought to be a combat, the great luminous ball drops and breaks, the flashing insects distributing themselves in a fiery mantle that floats away. However, it is not one battle that is fought, but a series continuing all night long; for as one division passes away, another quickly assembles, until the approaching dawn dissolves the scene. It was perhaps after such a night that the poet wrote:

Do I see only fireflies floating with the current?  
Or is the night itself drifting with its swarming stars?

Like the dragon-fly, the firefly is known in different parts of the country under different names. One especially, the *yūrei-hotaru*, “ghost firefly,” is of interest on account of its haunting the weeping willow tree, making the latter appear to be budding fire, an idea which is expressed in the following lines:

For the willow tree, the season for budding would seem to have returned in the dark. Look at the fireflies!



From a painting. Terrorizing a Victim

So much enjoyed has been the beauty and charm of many insects, that it has become habitual to feature them at social functions of both a public and private nature. The garden, which always is in view from either the teahouse or palace, offers an opportunity to enjoy them at close range. Hence, while caged songsters are distributed among the trees and shrubs, fireflies are liberated so that the repast of the guests may be enlivened by their glitter.

Insect hunting likewise has, from very remote times, been a popular diversion, particularly with the nobility. And, as it was very fashionable to inscribe lines to the little creatures which were the source of their amusement, innumerable verses, such as the following by Isshūi, were written:

If fireflies could but sing!  
Ah well, no doubt the song would be  
A melancholy thing!

China, too, had similar customs, for their literature includes many poems like the following by the celebrated Li Po:

Rain cannot quench thy lantern's light,  
Wind make it shine more brightly bright.  
Oh, why not fly to heaven afar  
And twinkle near the moon—a star?

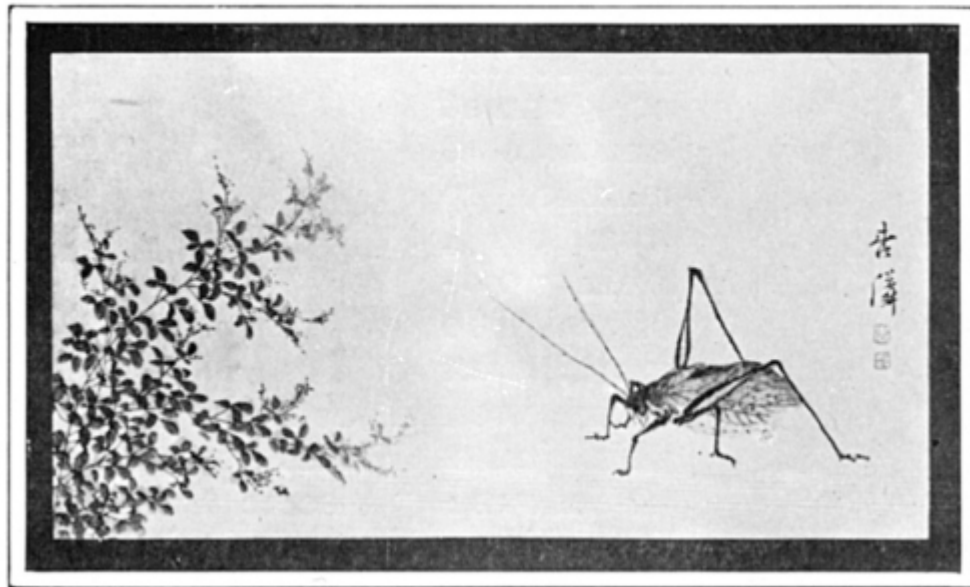
The firefly is rarely seen in art, probably due to its size, which offers very few pictorial possibilities; but it is quite frequently found in fable. The most familiar legend is that of *Kaguya-hime*,

“The Moon Child.” It relates to an old man by the name of Taketori who, while cutting bamboo, found in the node of a tree a girl baby whose body emitted a wonderful light. He carried her to his wife and, because of her radiance, they called her Teruko, “Little Light-giver.” As she grew to womanhood, her radiance was so great that it made her home shine with a great light, while her beauty was such that it attracted many suitors, even the Emperor himself. She was, however, unable to wed any mortal, for she was a celestial merely doing penance on earth for disobedience to her mother. But she really loved his Majesty, and when on her twentieth birthday her seventy sisters carried her away on a moonbeam, she wept silver tears which took wings and became fireflies that ever spend their time in search of her sweetheart.

Other insects, of greater interest to the natural scientist than to the poet and painter, such as the ant, the bee, and the spider, occur in the arts, but only in a minor way in the Flower and Insect Studies. The spider, however, no longer regarded as a true insect, has pictorial possibilities on account of the beautiful web which it weaves. It likewise figures in folklore, doubtless due to its malignant character. In the given illustration entitled *Raikō Under the Spell of the Demon Spider*, the great warrior is shown asleep under the influence of the evil *Tsachi-gumo*, while his allies are striving to overcome the four retainers who have undertaken to guard and protect him.

With this chapter the series entitled DECORATIVE MOTIVES OF ORIENTAL ART is concluded. In treating the subjects therein contained—ranging from creatures fabulous and legendary to animals real and familiar—it has been the purpose not only to give symbolic significances as well as associated legends, but to use for illustration the most beautiful examples of oriental art available.

From the mighty cloud-producing dragon to the lowly, playful dragon-fly has been a long flight and a gratifying one. If, then, the passing vision has been shared and enjoyed by but a few sympathetic spirits, these earnest prolonged flutterings have been worth the thought and time expended upon them.



From a *surimono*. Cricket and *Hagi* Plant

#### A JAPANESE ETCHING

LONESOMELY CLINGS THE DRAGON-FLY TO THE UNDERSIDE OF THE LEAF.  
AH! THE AUTUMN RAIN I

—YAYU.

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## INDEX

ABE no Seimei, 136, 137  
Abul-Fazl, 172  
*Aburazemi*, 269  
Adamantine Sow, 131  
Adonis, 129  
Æsop, 257  
Africa, 97  
Agastiya-muni, 172  
Agni, 116, 180  
Ahriman, 171  
Aino, 148, 162, 164  
Aioina, 162, 164  
Airāvata, 84, 99  
Ajanta Caves, 79  
Ajasco, 82  
Ajastasatru (King), 67  
Akahito (Yamabe no), 208  
Akamagaseki, 184  
Ākāśa-garbha, 223, 240  
Akbar (The Great), 116  
Altamira caves, 129  
*Amagoi-ken*, 8  
*Amakurikara-ken*, 8  
Amanagaku, 122  
Amaterasu, 176, 230, 231, 243  
*Ame no Murakumo no Tsurugi*, 8  
America (Central), 2, 32, 43, 166, 204  
America (North), 3, 45, 163, 232, 257  
America (South), 3, 43, 166, 169, 204, 263  
Amida, 233  
*Amrita*, 44, 167  
Amulets (bone), 48  
Ananta, 67, 168  
Antoku Tennō, 107  
Aphrodite, 129, 200  
Apollo, 201, 204, 221  
Arnold (Sir Edwin), 242  
*Ārya* Buddhas, 170  
*Ārya* Mañjuśrī, 53  
Aryans, 168  
Asahina Saburō, 203  
Assaratanam, 103  
Assyria, 29, 40, 58, 98, 197  
*Aswamedha*, 104  
Atharva Veda, 239  
Athene, 228  
Atlantis, 3  
Atsumori, 107  
Avalokitesvara, 53, 77, 159, 177, 194  
*Awabi*, 185  
Aztecs, 32, 45, 162, 166  
  
Baal, 98, 198

Babylonia, [3](#), [39](#), [40](#), [58](#), [98](#), [197](#)  
Badger (The), [141–146](#)  
Bakin (Kiokutei), [141](#), [155](#), [195](#)  
Bashikō, [14](#)  
Bast, [64](#), [151](#)  
Bat (The), [257–260](#), [264](#)  
Batō Kwannon, [105](#)  
Bear (The), [146–148](#)  
Benkei, [185](#), [247](#)  
Benzai-ten, [13](#), [51](#), [52](#), [169](#), [176](#), [177](#)  
Berosus, [197](#)  
Bhagavātā Purāna, [130](#), [239](#)  
Bishamon, [61](#), [62](#), [108](#)  
Bittern and Mussel (The), [188](#)  
Boar (The), [125–132](#)  
Bōmō, [14](#)  
*Bon* Festival, [91](#), [265](#)  
Bone Amulets, [48](#)  
Bonito (The), [193](#)  
Book of Changes (The), [11](#), [17](#)  
Book of Good Counsels (The), [241](#)  
Book of Poetry (The), [117](#)  
Book of Rites (The), [101](#)  
Botankwa, [89](#)  
Bourbons, [228](#)  
Boys' Festival, [190](#)  
Brahmā, [95](#), [130](#), [177](#), [239](#), [210](#)  
Brāhmanas, [44](#), [104](#)  
Buddha Gāya, [103](#)  
Buddhism, [54](#), [59](#), [60](#), [61](#), [113](#), [169](#)  
Bull (The), [85–100](#)  
Bull-driving Spring Song, [97](#)  
Bullfinch (The), [256](#)  
*Bumbuku Ghagama*, [143](#)  
Bunsho, [22](#)  
*Bushidō*, [213](#)  
Bushō, [22](#)  
*Butsu-ye*, [22](#)  
Butterfly (The), [260–264](#)  
Butterfly Dance, [263](#)  
Byron (Lord), [240](#)

Cæsar, [39](#), [70](#)  
Calendar Stone (Aztec), [166](#)  
Callisto, [148](#)  
Cambyses, [151](#)  
Campbell (Dr. C. A. R.), [257](#)  
Cat (The), [149–154](#)  
Cat-fish, [192](#)  
Cat of Nabeshima, [152](#)  
Cat Sorcery, [152–154](#)  
Catacombs, [40](#)  
Cecrops, [169](#)  
Cerealía, [139](#)  
*Ch'an Ch'u*, [161–179](#)  
Chandra, [158](#), [179](#)  
Chang Ch'ien, [92](#)



Chang Chi Ho, [55](#)  
Chang Chih-fu, [55](#)  
Chang Chin, [94](#)  
Chang Chiu-cho, [196](#)  
Chang-ngo, [161](#), [178](#)  
Chang Sêng-yu, [15](#)  
Chang Ssü Wei, [160](#)  
Ch'ao Fu, [89](#)  
Chao Kao, [114](#)  
Chao Lieh Ti (Chinese Emperor); [108](#)  
Chao Tao-lin, [23](#)  
Che (Chinese Emperor), [27](#)  
Ch'ên Nan, [14](#), [196](#)  
Ch'ên Tsung (Chinese Emperor), [37](#)  
Ch'ên Yung-chi, [16](#)  
Chhadaanta Jātāka, [79](#)  
Chi (The King of), [161](#)  
Chiao Tao, [110](#)  
*Chidori*, [253](#)  
Ch'ien Lung (Chinese Emperor), [211](#)  
Chi Fu T'ung, [125](#)  
*Ch'i-lin*, [31–40](#)  
Ch'in Kao, [195](#)  
Chinnan, [14](#), [196](#)  
Chi Shang Yuan Fujên, [37](#)  
Chi Shên Lu, [152](#)  
Chi Shih Chan, [111](#)  
*Chō*, [261–264](#)  
Chō Densu, [16](#), [178](#), [180](#)  
Chōkiuka, [196](#)  
Chōkwarō, [90](#), [106](#), [196](#)  
Chou Li, [18](#), [48](#)  
*Chu*, [60](#), [68](#)  
Chu-ko Liang, [15](#)  
Chu Shu Chi Nien, [27](#)  
Chun Chi Wei, [34](#)  
Chun Ch'iu, [35](#)  
Chun P'ing, [92](#)  
Chung Ku'ei, [190](#), [191](#), [259](#)  
Chung Kuo Lao, [111](#), [196](#)  
Cicada (The), [268](#)  
*Cintamani*, [78](#)  
Circe, [131](#)  
Clam (The), [188](#)  
Cobra (The), [165](#)  
Cock (The), [225–232](#)  
Cock-fighting, [228](#), [229](#)  
Confucian Analects, [27](#)  
Confucius, [34–36](#), [41](#), [85](#), [174](#)  
Copts, [171](#)  
Crab (The), [183–185](#)  
Crackling Mountain (The), [145](#), [163](#)  
Crane (The), [205–210](#)  
Crow (The), [241–247](#)  
Crusaders, [211](#)  
Cuckoo (The), [249–250](#)  
Cuvier (Baron), [156](#)

Dadhikra, [104](#)  
Dagon, [198](#)  
Dai Myōjin, [192](#)  
Dai-nichi Nyorai, [61](#), [64](#), [77](#)  
Dai Un Ko, [12](#)  
Daikoku, [90](#), [163](#), [164](#)  
Dakīnī, [140](#)  
Dakīnī-ten, [140](#)  
Dan no ura, [184](#)  
Darerea (Saint), [198](#)  
Deer (The), [109–116](#)  
Dharma-paryaya, [78](#)  
*Diggajas*, [84](#)  
Dionysus, [97](#), [200](#), [204](#)  
Divination, [49](#)  
Dog (The), [155–156](#)  
Dog deities, [155](#)  
Dokyō, [112](#)  
Dove (The), [253–255](#)  
Dragon (The), [1–16](#)  
Dragon-fly (The), [265–266](#)  
Dragon-gate (The), [189](#)  
Duck (The), [233–236](#)  
Duodenary Cycle, [17](#), [122](#), [164](#), [171](#)  
Durgā, [61](#), [63](#)

Ea, [197](#)  
*Ebi*, [181](#), [182](#)  
Ebisu, [191](#)  
Eguchi no Kimi, [83](#)  
Egyptians, [3](#), [40](#), [45](#), [46](#), [57](#), [58](#), [61](#), [63](#), [73](#), [98](#), [118](#), [128](#), [129](#), [151](#), [162](#), [170](#), [184](#), [204](#), [220](#), [240](#)  
Ehon Kojiden, [190](#)  
Ehon Taka Kagami, [216](#)  
Eight Emblems of Happy Augury, [204](#)  
Eight Famous Horses, [102](#)  
Eight Points of the Compass (Indian), [84](#)  
Eight *Shên*, [151](#)  
Eight Taoist Immortals, [180](#)  
Eight Taoist Symbols, [40](#)  
Eight Trigrams, [102](#), [260](#)  
Eight Virtues, [42](#)  
Fitoku (Kanō), [23](#), [102](#)  
Elephant (The), [69–84](#)  
Emma-ō, [100](#), [106](#), [203](#)  
Engishi-ki, [244](#)  
Eros, [200](#)  
E-wên, [62](#), [240](#)

Fahi, [174](#)  
Fā-hien, [53](#)  
Fa Huan, [175](#)  
Faerie Queen (The), [40](#)  
Falcon (The), [211–218](#)  
Feast of Lanterns, [91](#)  
*Fei shu*, [257–260](#)  
*Fêng huang*, [25–32](#)

Fêng Kan, [22](#)  
*Feng-shui*, [20](#), [21](#), [24](#), [48](#), [56](#)  
Fenollosa (Ernest F.), [215](#)  
Finnish Mythology, [139](#)  
Fire-fly (The), [270–272](#)  
Firoz-i-Khilji (Sultan), [116](#)  
Fish (The), [189–204](#)  
Five Bats, [259](#)  
Five Cardinal Relationships, [26](#)  
Five Kokuzō, [240](#)  
Five Poisons, [173](#)  
Four Fabulous Animals (The), [5](#)  
Fourteen Treasures (The), [44](#), [167](#)  
Fox (The), [133–140](#)  
Fox-fires, [138](#)  
Fox-possession, [139](#)  
Fox's Wedding (The), [139](#)  
Frog (The), [178–180](#)  
Fudō Myō-ō, [8](#), [140](#), [143](#), [178](#), [246](#)  
Fugen Bosatsu, [78](#), [83](#), [143](#)  
*Fugu*, [194](#)  
Fu-hsi, [3](#), [11](#), [102](#), [169](#)  
Fu-hu T'o, [151](#)  
Fujiwara no Sanesuke, [152](#)  
*Fukuro*, [255–256](#)  
Fukurokuju, [52](#), [90](#), [115](#), [210](#)  
Fu-yen Yeng-fu, [42](#), [43](#)

Gahō Hashimoto, [215](#)  
*Gama*, [178–180](#)  
Gama *Sennin*, [180](#), [196](#)  
*Gan*, [236–240](#)  
Ganesha, [75](#), [76](#), [164](#)  
Ganku, [23](#)  
Garuda, [32](#), [76](#), [124](#), [171](#)  
Gauls, [227](#)  
*Gembu*, [50](#)  
Genji Monogatari, [269](#)  
*Genjōraku*, [178](#)  
Giles (Herbert A.), [194](#)  
Globe-fish, [194](#)  
Go Dōshi, [191](#)  
*Gomane*, [193](#)  
Gomō, [113](#)  
Gonds (The), [45](#)  
Goose (The), [236–240](#)  
Gourd (The), [192](#)  
Goyō Kokuzō, [240](#)  
Gozu, [90](#)  
Grampus (The), [202](#)  
Greece, [98](#), [103](#), [148](#), [169](#), [180](#), [198](#), [200](#), [220](#), [221](#), [228](#), [240](#)  
Gwa-ten, [158](#)  
Gyoken Tai, [120](#)

Hachiman Tarō, [237](#), [251](#), [255](#)  
*Hachisuke*, [148](#)

Hadesu, [22](#)  
*Hak'kei*, [237](#)  
*Hakkenden*, [155](#)  
Hakudō, [112](#)  
Hakuten, [251](#)  
*Ha-ma*, [178–180](#)  
*Hamaguri*, [188](#)  
Hamilton Hartridge (Prof.), [257](#)  
Han Hsiang-tzü, [180](#)  
*Hanasaka Jiji*, [155](#)  
Handaka Sonja, [14](#)  
Hang-yüan Shu-yü, [235](#)  
Hannibal, [70](#)  
*Hansa*, [236–240](#)  
Hanumān, [124](#), [146](#)  
*Hataori-mushi*, [270](#)  
*Hato*, [254–255](#)  
Hattara Sonja, [22](#)  
Hayagriva, [131](#), [132](#)  
Hearn (Lafcadio), [119](#), [122](#)  
*Hebi*, [165–178](#)  
Hebrews, [98](#), [128](#), [129](#), [198](#), [226](#)  
Hera, [221](#)  
Herodotus, [39](#)  
Hidari Jingorō, [122](#), [164](#)  
Hideyoshi (Taikō), [31](#)  
*Higurashi*, [269](#)  
Hiko-hohodemi, [7](#)  
*Hiragi*, [193](#)  
Hiranya Kasipu, [63](#)  
Hiranyāksha, [130](#)  
Hittites, [98](#)  
*Ho*, [205–210](#)  
Hōjō Takatoki (Shōgun), [246](#)  
*Hōju no Tama*, [7](#)  
Hoken Zenji, [22](#)  
Hokke-kyō, [252](#)  
Holly, [193](#)  
*Hō-ō*, [26–32](#)  
*Hōraizan*, [49](#), [208](#)  
*Hōrajima*, [208](#)  
Hors Apollo, [240](#)  
Horse (The), [101–108](#)  
*Hoshi Matsuri*, [92](#)  
Hōshōbō, [96](#)  
*Hotaru*, [270–272](#)  
*Hotoke Sama*, [265](#)  
*Hototogisu*, [249–250](#)  
*Hou*, [117–124](#)  
Hou Hsien-hsing, [180](#), [196](#)  
Hou I, [17](#), [8](#)  
Hsi Wang Mu, [3](#), [13](#), [28](#), [37](#), [101](#), [178](#)  
Hsi Yu Chi, [119](#)  
*Hsiang*, [69–84](#)  
Hsiang-Tzü, [181](#)  
*Hsiao*, [255–256](#)  
Hsuan Hsieh Chih, [110](#)

Hsuan Tsung (Chinese Emperor), [110](#)

Hsueh Tsung, [110](#)

Huang Ch'u-p'ing, [116](#)

Huang Ngan, [51](#)

Huang Sui, [147](#)

Huang Ti (Chinese Emperor), [14](#), [15](#), [27](#), [35](#), [42](#), [44](#), [112](#)

Huang Ting Chien, [37](#), [150](#)

Hui Tsung (Chinese Emperor), [214](#)

*Huli*, [133–140](#)

*Hu-tieh*, [261–264](#)

Hü Yeh, [89](#)

*Hyotan*, [192](#)

*I*, [125–132](#)

I Ching, [17](#), [20](#), [22](#)

Ichijō Tennō, [152](#)

Ichikawa Danjurō, [182](#)

Ichikawa Ebijurō, [182](#)

Ieyasu (Shōgun), [141](#), [212](#), [216](#)

Inari, [138](#), [139](#), [140](#)

Inari Chinza Yurai, [140](#)

India, [3](#), [32](#), [45](#), [46](#), [73](#), [74](#), [75](#), [76](#), [81](#), [84](#), [94](#), [99](#), [103](#), [115](#), [116](#), [124](#), [129](#), [158](#), [171](#), [172](#), [180](#), [200](#), [220](#), [226](#), [234](#), [245](#)

Indians (American), [45](#), [148](#), [242](#)

Indra, [84](#), [99](#), [124](#), [159](#), [169](#)

Insects, [265–272](#)

*Inn*, [155–156](#)

*Inu-bariko*, [156](#)

Isis, [198](#)

Iskshvahu, [169](#)

Isshi, [92](#)

Itō Sōda, [153](#)

Izanagi, [11](#)

Izanami, [11](#)

Izuna Gongen, [138](#), [140](#)

Jains, [223](#)

Jambavat, [146](#)

Janamajoya (Rāja), [172](#)

Jaratkaru, [167](#)

Jesus Christ, [201](#), [226](#), [227](#)

Jih Ya Chan I, [27](#), [28](#)

Jimmu Tennō, [229](#), [243](#), [244](#), [265](#)

Jingo Kōgō, [7](#), [59](#)

Jiraiya, [180](#)

Jizō, [106](#)

Jō and Uba, [209](#)

Jōgaisho, [158](#)

Josan no Miya, [152](#)

*Jū-i*, [28](#)

Jūni-ten, [158](#)

Jurōjin, [115](#), [120](#)

*Kachi-kachi-yama*, [145](#), [163](#)

Kadori Myōjin, [192](#)

Kaga no Chiyo, [266](#)

Kaguya-hime, [272](#)

Kakuban, [143](#)  
Kakuyo, [92](#)  
Kālīya, [171](#)  
Kalki, [105](#)  
Kāmadhenu, [95](#)  
Kamata Matahachi, [153](#)  
Kamatari, [7](#), [187](#), [188](#)  
*Kame*, [47–52](#)  
*Kamo*, [234–235](#)  
*Kaname Ishi*, [192](#)  
Kanaoka, [102](#)  
K'ang Hsi (Chinese Emperor), [16](#), [96](#), [112](#), [211](#)  
Kangosattva, [84](#)  
*Kani*, [183–185](#)  
*Kankodori*, [231](#)  
Kansa (King) [99](#), [100](#)  
Kanshosai, [180](#)  
Kantanka, [104](#)  
Kao Tsung (Chinese Emperor), [152](#)  
K'ao Yü, [116](#)  
Kapilavastu, [170](#)  
*Karasu*, [241–247](#)  
Kariba Myōjin, [155](#)  
Kārtikeya, [220](#)  
Kāśuyapa, [44](#), [172](#)  
Katō Kiyomasa, [22](#), [202](#)  
*Katsuo*, [193](#)  
Katsuyu, [116](#)  
Keio Pu, [135](#)  
Kengyū, [91](#)  
*Khadga*, [78](#)  
Kharwars, [45](#)  
Kidōmaru, [90](#)  
Kikai-ga-shima, [203](#)  
Kingfisher (The), [256](#)  
Kinkō, [195](#), [196](#)  
Kintarō, [126](#), [148](#), [191](#)  
*Kiri no ki*, [31](#)  
*Kirigirisu*, [270](#)  
*Kirin*, [33–40](#)  
*Kitsune*, [133–140](#)  
*Kiu*, [254–255](#)  
Kiyemon, [148](#)  
Kiyowara Takenori, [236](#)  
Ko Hung, [111](#)  
Koan, [51](#)  
Kōbō Daishi, [8](#), [140](#), [155](#)  
*Kochō no Mai*, [263](#)  
*Koi*, [189–191](#)  
*Kokka*, [214](#)  
*Koma-inu*, [59](#), [65](#)  
*Kōmori*, [257–260](#)  
Kompira, [50](#), [246](#)  
Kongō Kokuzō, [61](#), [62](#), [64](#), [223](#)  
Korea, [45](#), [46](#), [137](#), [183](#), [211](#), [229](#)  
Koreijin, [22](#), [196](#)  
Kōshin, [122](#)



Kōshohei, [116](#)  
Kotari (King of), [90](#)  
Kōtoku Tennō, [231](#)  
*K'ou Ku*, [249–250](#)  
*Kou tzŭ*, [155–156](#)  
Koyama Hangwan, [148](#)  
Krishna, [84](#), [99](#), [100](#), [171](#), [188](#), [218](#)  
Kronos, [171](#)  
Kuan-yin, [13](#), [53](#), [77](#), [120](#), [177](#), [199](#)  
*Kubibiki*, [203](#), [268](#)  
Kublai Khān, [211](#)  
Kudra, [172](#)  
*Kuei*, [41–52](#)  
*Kuei Shē*, [50](#)  
*Kujaku*, [219–224](#)  
Kujaku Myō-ō, [228](#)  
Ku K'ai-chih, [15](#)  
Ku Ling-jên, [22](#), [196](#)  
Kumagai Jirō, [148](#)  
Kumagaya Naozane, [107](#)  
Kumano *Gongen*, [244](#)  
*Kung chi*, [225–232](#)  
*K'ung chüeh*, [219–224](#)  
Kung Sui, [101](#)  
Kūrma avatār, [44](#)  
Kushi Inada-hime, [8](#)  
Kuvera, [107](#)  
Kwammu Tennō, [50](#)  
Kwannon, [53](#), [105](#), [120](#), [177](#), [178](#), [194](#), [195](#), [255](#)  
Kwannon kyō, [195](#)  
Kw'en Lun Mountains, [3](#), [49](#), [116](#), [258](#)  
Kwun, [147](#)

Lactantius, [32](#)  
Lakshmi, [51](#), [76](#), [84](#), [168](#), [220](#)  
Lāmaists, [67](#), [259](#)  
Lamb (Charles), [128](#)  
Lankā, [124](#), [146](#)  
Lao Tzŭ, [9](#), [88](#), [180](#)  
*Li*, [141–146](#)  
Li Ki, [42](#)  
Li Po, [13](#)  
Li Shou, [151](#)  
Li Shui Ts'uan Chüan, [24](#)  
Li T'ieh-Kuai, [180](#), [184](#), [196](#)  
Liang Shu, [242](#)  
Life Among the Modocs, [148](#)  
Lin Shu, [35](#)  
Lin Tsung Yuan, [173](#)  
*Ling chih*, [241](#)  
Ling Fei, [37](#)  
Ling-Piao Lu Yü Chi, [173](#)  
Lion and Unicorn, [40](#)  
Lobster (The), [181–182](#)  
Lombards (The), [211](#)  
*Lu*, [109–116](#)  
Lu-lu Wang, [236](#)

Lu Ngao, [51](#)  
Lu Nu Shêng, [113](#)  
Lucky Tea-kettle (The), [143](#)  
*Lung hsia*, [181–182](#)  
Lung Yu, [29](#)

*Ma*, [101–108](#)  
Ma Ku, [110](#), [115](#)  
Mahābārata, [104](#), [167](#), [240](#)  
Mahā-deva, [172](#)  
Mahākāla, [84](#)  
Mahānāman, [170](#)  
Manasā, [167](#)  
Mandara-jin, [91](#)  
Mandarin Duck, [233–236](#)  
Mandodari, [180](#)  
Mangwa, [39](#), [62](#), [74](#), [146](#), [263](#)  
Manjhis, [45](#)  
Mañjusrī, [53](#), [54](#), [59](#), [77](#), [78](#), [100](#)  
Mantis (The), [266–268](#)  
Manu, [94](#), [199](#)  
*Mao*, [149–154](#)  
Mao Mêng, [14](#)  
Mao Shê-huang, [14](#)  
Mao Ying, [161](#)  
Mārā, [82](#), [84](#)  
Mārīcī, [131](#), [132](#)  
Marishi-deva, [132](#)  
Marishi-ten, [132](#)  
*Matsu-mushi*, [270](#)  
Matsya avatār, [199](#)  
Māyā, [79](#), [154](#)  
Maya Civilization, [2](#), [3](#), [32](#), [43](#), [166](#), [204](#)  
Mayedo (Count), [23](#)  
Mayuri Vidyārāja, [223](#)  
Medal of Victory, [218](#)  
Mei Fu, [29](#), [37](#)  
Meng Chêng Míng, [150](#)  
Mēng T'ien, [162](#)  
Mermaid, [198](#)  
Meru (Mount), [239](#)  
Mesopotamia, [56](#), [129](#)  
Mexico, [158](#), [166](#), [263](#)  
Miao Chên, [194](#)  
Michizane (Sugawara no), [88](#), [89](#), [96](#)  
Miketsu no Kami, [140](#)  
Milky Way, [18](#), [32](#), [91](#), [92](#)  
Miller (Joaquin), [148](#)  
Ming Huang (Chinese Emperor), [14](#), [154](#), [190](#)  
Ming Tombs, [45](#)  
*Minogame*, [50](#)  
Minotaur, [98](#)  
Mithra, [45](#), [57](#), [98](#)  
Mitsukuni (Daimyo), [192](#)  
Miura Kuranosuke, [137](#)  
*Miyamairi*, [156](#)  
Mizunoya Tennō, [54](#), [61](#), [64](#)

Mohammed, [55](#), [68](#), [108](#), [151](#)  
Mohammedans, [128](#), [220](#)  
*Mokugyo*, [204](#)  
Monju Bosatsu, [53](#), [54](#), [59](#), [60](#), [78](#)  
Monkey (The), [117](#)–[124](#)  
Moon-gods, [118](#)  
Muchilinda, [170](#)  
*Mugē Hō-jiu no Tama*, [7](#), [187](#)  
Mull Wang (King), [101](#)  
Muirgen, [198](#)  
Muycas (The), [166](#)  
Myōchin, [182](#)  
Myōken Bosatsu, [43](#)  
*Myōto-seki*, [188](#)

Nādir Shāh, [220](#)  
Nāg the Deoto, [172](#)  
Nāgas, [4](#), [166](#), [167](#), [168](#), [169](#)  
Nāginī, [169](#), [177](#)  
Nahusha, [172](#)  
*Namazu*, [192](#)  
*Namida no Ame*, [92](#)  
Nara-sinha, [61](#), [63](#)  
Nasu no Yoichi, [106](#)  
*Naubandhana*, [200](#)  
Negroes, [163](#)  
*Neko*, [149](#)–[154](#)  
*Neko-ishi*, [154](#)  
Neptune, [200](#)  
Nestorian Monument, [46](#)  
*Nezumi*, [164](#)  
Nichiren, [143](#)  
Nichiren sect, [139](#), [252](#)  
Nightingale (The), [250](#)–[252](#)  
Nihongi, [11](#), [144](#), [223](#)  
Nii no Ama, [107](#)  
Nine-tailed Fox, [136](#), [152](#)  
Ning Ch'i, [88](#)  
Nitta no Shirō, [126](#)  
*Niu*, [85](#)–[100](#)  
Noguchi (Yone), [215](#)  
Norse myths, [240](#)  
North American Indians, [45](#)  
Nü Kua, [3](#), [169](#)  
Nyō-i, [78](#)

Oannes, [197](#)  
Octopus (The), [202](#)  
Odin, [240](#)  
*Ōdori*, [218](#)  
Odysseus, [198](#)  
Ogata Shume, [180](#)  
Oguri Hangwan, [107](#)  
Okame, [90](#)  
Ōkuni-nushinoMikoto, [123](#), [16](#)  
Ōkyo, [16](#), [196](#), [204](#), [224](#)

*Ōmi Hakkei*, 237, 238  
Omohi-Kane, 230  
Ōmono no oki, 185  
*Ōndori*, 225–232  
Ono no Tōfū, 180  
Ori-hime, 244  
Orion, 200, 201  
Ormuzd, 98, 171  
Orochimaru, 180  
Orpheus, 201  
*Oshidori*, 233–236  
Ōshikyō, 180, 196, 206  
Osiris, 129, 171  
Otohome, 52  
Ō Toyo, 153  
Owl (The), 255–256

Pa Chu-yü, 133  
*Pa Ch'ün Ma*, 102  
*Pa-Kwa*, 102, 260  
*Pa Pao*, 40, 44  
*Pai Hsieh Chuan*, 174  
Pan, 201  
Pan Ku, 44  
Pan-tho-chiao, 14  
*P'ang-hsieh*, 183–185  
Pao Ch'êng, 67  
Pao Pu Tzū, 117  
*Pao t'ao*, 258  
Pao Wu Chih, 27  
Paraśurāma, 76  
*Pāravarṇī*, 220  
Parjana, 180  
Pārvatī, 99, 172  
Peacock (The), 219–224  
Peacock Throne, 220  
*Pei lu*, 247–248  
*P'êng Lai Shan*, 208  
Persia, 55, 57, 98, 171, 220  
Peru, 166, 204  
Phaon, 221  
Phœnicians, 198, 221  
Phœnix (The), 25–32  
Pieh Tsao, 112  
Pliny, 39, 72, 227, 240  
Plover (The), 253  
Po-tho-lo, 22  
Polar Star, 44  
Poseidon, 200  
Prajāpati, 44, 130  
Prajñāpāramitā, 54  
P'u-hsien Pú-sa, 77, 79

Quail (The), 256  
Quetzalcoatl, 162, 166

Rabbit (The), [157](#)  
Rādhā, [99](#)  
*Rāgini*, [172](#)  
Rāma, [124](#), [132](#)  
Rāmāyana, [124](#), [130](#), [132](#), [146](#), [180](#)  
Rāvana, [132](#), [180](#)  
Rat (The), [164](#)  
Ratthaptala, [116](#)  
Rattlesnake, [165](#)  
Rig Veda, [100](#)  
Rihaku, [13](#)  
*Risu*, [163–164](#)  
River Lo, [13](#)  
Roc, [32](#)  
Rōko, [51](#)  
Rōkotōkatame, [249](#)  
Romans, [128](#), [201](#), [228](#), [240](#)  
Rōshi, [180](#)  
*Ryū no tama*, [10](#)  
Ryūja, [6](#)  
Ryūjin, [6](#), [52](#), [123](#)  
Ryūzada, [140](#)

Saddharma Pundarika, [78](#)  
Saigyō Hōshi, [83](#)  
Saitō Sukeyasu, [142](#)  
*Saiyuki*, [119](#)  
Sākya-muni, [12](#), [43](#), [52](#), [53](#), [54](#), [77](#), [79](#), [80](#), [81](#), [82](#), [84](#), [90](#), [113](#), [154](#), [159](#), [170](#), [175](#)  
Samanta-bhadra, [77](#)  
*Sambiki Saru*, [122](#)  
*Same*, [202](#)  
*San puku*, [216](#), [217](#)  
*San Sukumi*, [180](#)  
San Yüan Ch'ên, [116](#)  
Sanadana, [131](#)  
Sanetomo (Shōgun), [203](#)  
Sani, [76](#)  
Sanjakubō, [140](#)  
Sannō Gongen, [123](#)  
*Sansan-kudo*, [261](#)  
*Sanshū no Shinki*, [8](#), [41](#)  
Sanzō Hōshi, [119](#)  
Sanzu-gawa, [203](#)  
Sarasvatī, [177](#), [220](#), [240](#)  
Sardine (The), [193](#)  
*Saru*, [117–124](#)  
*Saru-hashī*, [118](#)  
Sarva-nīvarana Vishkambhī, [158](#)  
Sea-ear (The), [185](#)  
Sea Floor Life, [181–188](#)  
Seiōbo, [13](#)  
Seishi, [77](#)  
Sekhet, [64](#)  
*Semi*, [268](#)  
Semiramis, [198](#)  
Sensō Dōjin, [180](#)  
Seoul, [45](#)

Serpent (The), [165–178](#)  
Serpent of Mayach, [2](#)  
*Sesshō Seki*, [137](#)  
Sesshū, [164](#)  
*Shachi*, [202](#)  
Shāh Jahān, [220](#)  
Shakespeare, [240](#)  
Shakkyo, [60](#)  
*Shan-ch'u*, [125–132](#)  
Shan-kai Ching, [13](#), [135](#)  
Shang Li T'ien Wei, [26](#)  
*Shê*, [165–178](#)  
Shi Hu (Chinese Emperor), [27](#)  
*Shichifukujin*, [63](#), [176](#), [182](#), [191](#), [217](#)  
Shih Niu Chih Sung, [85](#)  
*Shih-tzŭ*, [53–68](#)  
*Shika*, [109–116](#)  
*Shimadai*, [208](#)  
Shimamura Danjō Takanori, [185](#)  
Shingon sect, [140](#)  
*Shinkirō*, [188](#)  
Shinretsu, [22](#)  
Shintōism, [244](#)  
*Shira-sagi*, [247–248](#)  
*Shishi*, [53–68](#)  
*Shitakiri Suzume*, [252](#)  
Shiyei, [195](#)  
Shoda Yorinori, [144](#)  
Shōhaku, [89](#)  
*Shōjō*, [70](#), [71](#)  
Shōki, [190](#), [259](#)  
Shokujō, [91](#)  
Shonai Kasei Dan, [142](#)  
*Shou*, [258](#)  
Shou Lao, [110](#), [259](#)  
*Shou Shan*, [49](#)  
Shōzuka no Baba, [203](#)  
Shrimp (The), [183](#)  
Shu, [64](#)  
*Shū*, [164](#)  
Shu Yu, [24](#)  
Shuan Ti (Chinese Emperor), [27](#)  
Shun (Chinese Emperor), [69](#)  
Shuo Wên, [19](#), [73](#)  
Siam, [228](#)  
Simhanāda, [159](#)  
Sita, [124](#), [132](#)  
Siva, [95](#), [99](#), [172](#)  
Skand Purāna, [63](#)  
Snowy Heron (The), [247–248](#)  
Sōjōbō, [127](#), [247](#)  
Solar Race (The), [44](#)  
Solomon (King), [219](#)  
Soma, [115](#), [158](#), [179](#)  
Song of The Bulls, [85–86](#)  
*Sono no Yuki*, [195](#)  
Sparrow (The), [252–253](#)



Spencer (Edmund), [40](#)  
Sphinx, [57](#)  
Spider (The), [272](#)  
Squirrel (The), [163–164](#)  
*Ssŭ Fang*, [17](#), [20](#), [41](#)  
*Ssŭ Ling*, [5](#), [33](#), [41](#)  
Su Shê, [109](#)  
Su Shun-ch'in, [134](#)  
Su Tung Pu, [109](#)  
Sugawara no Michizane, [88](#), [89](#), [96](#)  
Suiten, [51](#)  
Sumeru (Mount), [28](#), [44](#), [49](#), [204](#)  
Sun Cult, [57](#)  
Sun Wu K'ung, [119](#), [120](#), [121](#), [132](#)  
Sung-shü, [82](#)  
*Sung-shü*, [163–164](#)  
Sūrya, [103](#), [168](#)  
Susano-o no Mikoto, [8](#), [188](#), [230](#)  
*Suzume*, [252–253](#)  
*Suzumushi*, [269](#)  
Swallow (The), [253](#)  
Swan (The), [240](#)  
*Swastika*, [258–259](#)  
Syria, [98](#), [148](#)

T'a Ki, [136](#)  
Tai Chên Wang Fujên, [8](#), [13](#), [180](#)  
*Tai Chi*, [259–260](#)  
Tai Yi Tien Tsun, [54](#)  
Taihei-ki, [143](#)  
Taira no Masakado, [262](#)  
Taishin ō Fujin, [180](#)  
Taittiriya Sanhita, [130](#)  
*Taka*, [211–218](#)  
Takenouchi no Sukune, [7](#)  
*Tako*, [202](#)  
Takshaka, [172](#)  
Tamamo no Maye, [136](#)  
Tammuz, [129](#)  
*Tanabata*, [91–92](#)  
*Tanuki*, [141–146](#)  
Tan Yüan, [55](#)  
Tanyū (Kanō), [23](#), [103](#)  
Tao (Chinese Empress), [222](#)  
Tao Tê Ching, [88](#)  
Taoists, [20](#), [21](#), [29](#), [30](#), [41](#), [43](#), [52](#), [93](#), [138](#), [159](#), [205](#), [257](#), [259](#), [262](#), [267](#)  
Tefnut, [64](#)  
Tekkai, [180](#), [196](#)  
*Tengu*, [140](#), [246](#), [247](#)  
Têng Yu, [29](#)  
*Teruko*, [272](#)  
Tevacayohua, [162](#)  
Tezcatlipoca, [166](#)  
Three Lucky Things, [216](#)  
Three Mystic Apes, [122](#)  
Ti-tsang, [77](#)  
Ti Wang Shih Chi, [69](#)

Tibet, [102](#), [178](#), [183](#), [223](#), [240](#)  
 Tide-ruling Jewels, [6](#)  
*T'ien ma*, [266–268](#)  
 Tiger (The), [17–24](#)  
 Ting Chou Chih (Chinese Emperor), [162](#)  
 Tlaloc, [162](#)  
 Toad (The), [178–180](#)  
 Toba Tennō, [136](#)  
 Tōbōsaku, [115](#), [118](#)  
 Tōhaku (Hasegawa), [23](#)  
 Tokirō, [108](#)  
 Tokiwa Gozen, [248](#)  
 Toltecs, [32](#), [166](#)  
*Tombō*, [265–266](#)  
 Tonacatlicatl, [166](#)  
*Tōrō*, [266–268](#)  
 Tortoise (The), [41–52](#)  
 Totemism, [1](#)  
 Toyotama-hime, [8](#)  
 Tree Worship, [1](#)  
 Trout (The), [193](#)  
 Ts'ai Lan, [22](#)  
 Tsao Kuo, [112](#)  
 Ts'ao Kuo-ch'iu, [184](#)  
 Ts'ao Pu-hsing, [15](#), [16](#)  
*Tsubame*, [253](#)  
*Tsuchi-qumo*, [272](#)  
 Tsui Hao, [29](#)  
*Tsuku-tsuku-boshi*, [269](#)  
 Tsurayuki, [251](#)  
*Tsuru*, [205–210](#)  
 T'u Shu Chi Ch'êng, [16](#)  
*Tugra*, [68](#), [74](#), [76](#)  
 T'ung Fang-so, [180](#)  
 Twelve Deva Kings, [158](#)  
 Typhon, [129](#)  
 Tzū Hung, [236](#)  
 Tzū Ying, [195](#)

Uba, [209](#)  
 Uchchaihsravas, [124](#)  
 Uga no Mitama, [124](#), [140](#)  
*Uguisu*, [250–252](#)  
 Uji Shiu Monogatari, [143](#)  
 Ulysses, [131](#)  
*Uma*, [101–108](#)  
 Uma no Myōbu, [152](#)  
 Unicorn (The), [33–40](#)  
 Urashima Tarō, [52](#)  
*Usagi*, [157–163](#)  
*Usagi to Wani*, [163](#)  
*Ushi*, [85–100](#)  
*Ushi Matsuri*, [91](#)  
 Ushiwaka, [127](#), [247](#)  
 Usuyuki-hime, [195](#)  
 Uzume, [231](#)

*Vahan*, [77](#), [78](#), [83](#), [99](#), [107](#), [239](#)  
Vairocana, [77](#)  
Vaitarani, [95](#)  
Vajrāsattva, [84](#)  
Vajrāvārāhi, [131](#)  
Valkyrie, [240](#)  
Vaphio, [98](#)  
Vārāhi, [131](#)  
Varuna, [57](#), [200](#)  
Vasishtha, [180](#)  
Vasūki, [44](#), [167](#)  
Vayū, [115](#), [124](#)  
Vedas, [94](#), [100](#), [166](#)  
Verethragna, [126](#)  
Verne (Jules), [202](#)  
Vinatā, [172](#)  
Vishaharī, [167](#)  
Vishnu, [44](#), [76](#), [95](#), [104](#), [130](#), [167](#), [168](#), [188](#), [199](#), [200](#), [218](#), [239](#)  
Vishnu Purāna, [188](#)

Waka-hirume, [244](#)  
Wakan Jimbutsu Shu, [70](#)  
Walker (Margaret C), [215](#)  
*Wan szǔ*, [258–259](#)  
Wang Tzū-chiao, [180](#), [196](#), [206](#)  
Wei Po, [68](#)  
Wên Hsiao, [22](#), [24](#)  
Wên-shǔ, [53](#), [54](#), [77](#)  
*Wên-shǔ Shi Li*, [54](#)  
White Hare of Inaba (The), [163](#)  
Wild Ass (The), [39](#)  
*Wu fu*, [259](#)  
Wu Mêng, [113](#)  
Wu Shu, [73](#)  
Wu Tao-tzǔ, [15](#), [191](#)  
Wu Ti (Chinese Emperor), [36](#), [37](#), [92](#), [101](#), [111](#), [259](#)  
Wu T'sai Lan, [24](#)  
*Wu-tung* Tree, [31](#)  
*Wu ya*, [241–247](#)

Xintencli, [162](#)

Yahveh, [98](#)  
Yama, [100](#), [131](#)  
Yamāntaka, [100](#)  
Yamato Dake, [8](#)  
Yamato Damashii, [191](#)  
Yamdok Lake, [131](#)  
Yamī, [100](#)  
*Yang* and *Yin*, [9](#), [20](#), [32](#), [44](#), [60](#), [65](#), [101](#), [102](#), [116](#), [138](#), [150](#), [160](#), [225](#), [241](#), [259](#)  
Yang Kuei-fei, [154](#)  
Yang Yen Lan (General), [110](#)  
Yao (Chinese Emperor), [27](#), [70](#), [89](#), [147](#), [178](#), [231](#)  
*Yawata no orochi*, [8](#), [10](#)  
*Yeh t'u*, [157–163](#)  
Yeh Wang (King), [136](#)

Yek Fei, [125](#)  
Yellow River, [6](#)  
*Yen*, [253](#)  
Yen Lo Wang, [100](#)  
Yen Sui Hou, [65](#)  
Yi Chien Chih, [125](#)  
Yi Yüen, [147](#)  
*Ying*, [211–218](#)  
Yokihi, [154](#), [190](#)  
Yone Noguchi, [215](#)  
Yorimitsu (shōgun), [90](#), [148](#)  
Yoritomo (shōgun), [126](#) [203](#), [207](#), [255](#)  
Yoshiiye, [237](#)  
Yoshinaka (Kiso no), [85](#)  
Yoshitsune, [185](#), [247](#)  
Yü (Chinese Emperor), [6](#), [14](#), [44](#), [69](#), [90](#), [161](#)  
*Yü*, [189–191](#)  
Yü Ti, [120](#)  
Yü Yang Tsa Tsu, [18](#)  
Yuan Chên, [174](#)  
Yüan Chi, [25](#)  
Yüan Chuang, [119](#)  
Yüan Hao Wên, [132](#)  
Yüan Hsieh, [82](#)  
Yüan Hsien T'sa Chi, [128](#)  
Yucatan, [2](#), [3](#), [166](#)  
Yudhishthira, [172](#)  
Yüeh Chuang, [174](#)  
Yūryaku Tennō, [266](#)

Zen Sect, [85](#), [204](#)  
Zenkoji, [91](#)  
Zeus, [250](#)  
*Zō*, [69–84](#)  
Zodiac (Chinese), [17](#), [93](#), [156](#), [171](#)

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